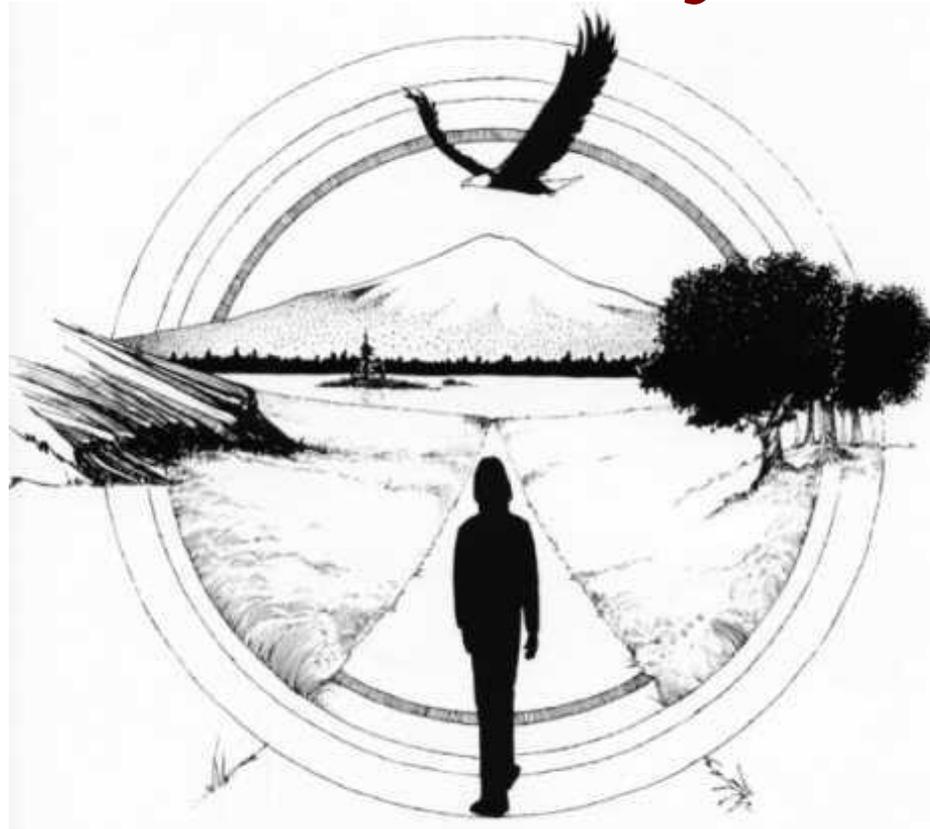


We Make the Path by Walking it



The Chippewas of the Thames First Nation

Comprehensive Community Plan 2012 to 2022

DRAFT FINAL (JULY 2012)

Developed by:

*Community members of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
COTT Chief and Council
COTT Staff and administration*



With the Support of:



*Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning
Box 395, Cochrane, Alberta Canada
T4C 1A6
Ph. 403-932-0882; Fax 403-932-0883*

www.fourworlds.ca; anyone@fourworlds.ca

For further information, contact:

*Brenda Rivers, Chief Executive Administrator
Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
RR # 1320, Chippewas Road
N0L 1Y0, ON
Ph. 519-289-5555
brivers@cottfn.com*



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PROLOGUE

After a long winter, there are many signs that spring is coming, and the land is waking up. Birds that migrated south in the fall begin to return. The smell of damp earth is in the air. The sounds of water running, the discovery of tiny shoots of green poking through the ground and new buds on the trees all tell us that the season of growing is upon us.

There are also signs that tell us when a community is waking up after a long winter of forgetting who they are, and being asleep to their own true potential and possibilities.

1. Young people begin stepping forward, offering to do things for the community.
2. Leaders begin to really listen to the people and make significant efforts to ensure that everyone who has something to say can be heard.
3. The people begin accepting their own history and cultural past as a foundation for moving forward. Even those who previously rejected this past begin to accept it.
4. Other communities begin to look to the awakening community for leadership.
5. Calls for healing and unity may be heard from across lines of previous differences and conflict within the community. Significantly, there is a new willingness to look in the mirror and to look within to find the root causes of problems.
6. The progress of the community as a whole is increasingly seen to be inseparable from the progress of every individual. “No one left behind” becomes an important value.
7. Members of the community begin to step in the circle of the human family, bringing the gifts and strengths of the community to the world.

During the six months of work that has led to the preparation of the Chippewas of the Thames Comprehensive Community Plan, all of these signs were evident in and around the process.

We saw young people stepping forward with ideas and initiatives for change. We saw leadership making significant and repeated efforts to ensure that the voices of the community members are heard, both in the planning work itself, and related to the Bear Creek land claims discussion. We saw many signs of Christians and traditionalists reaching out to each other and we saw many people from all backgrounds responding eagerly to opportunities to learn more about their history, language and cultural heritage.

We also saw other communities responding enthusiastically to the leadership of Chippewas of the Thames during the historic February 29, 2011 reunion of the Three Fires Council, which brought together the Chief and Councils from Bkejwanong, Aamjiwnaang, Kettle and Stoney Point, Caldwell and Chippewas of the Thames for the purpose of re-establishing a permanent treaty council focused on collaboration and mutual support related to nation building, treaty issues and territorial responsibility. At this meeting, as in traditional times, specially designed Wampum strings were exchanged in a ceremonial reclaiming of this ancient union.

The plan represented within this document is strongly infused with the value that the welfare of the whole is inseparably linked to the wellbeing of each and every individual community member and many of the plans, goals and strategies presented are specifically intended to support and assist grassroots community members.

Finally, Chippewas of the Thames members are now scattered far and wide and many are making outstanding contributions to human knowledge and progress through contributions in the arts, spiritual and cultural leadership, political leadership as well as technical and professional contributions.

All of this points to a highly important reality. The community of Chippewas of the Thames is experiencing a new awakening; a spiritual springtime that will eventually produce a rich and abundant harvest of new growth, positive change, healing and new possibilities for every member of the community.

This document “We Make the Path by Walking it” describes what we now understand of the journey we need to undertake.

INTRODUCTION

This is the draft final version of the Chippewas of the Thames Comprehensive Community Plan. This draft is intended for final review by community members, staff, Chief and Council and other important entities and groups within the community. It has been produced after extensive input and review by COTTFN community members, program staff and leadership and represents a strong community consensus about what the important issues and challenges are, and which steps are needed to create the community we want.

Phase One: Making the Plan

The process of making this Plan began in June 2011 when the COTTFN approached Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning to serve as facilitators and technical support providers to the community in making a comprehensive community Plan. Phase One consisted of 3 parts, and resulted in this draft.

Part I entailed establishing a Steering Committee, appointed by Chief and Council, and finalizing an arrangement for implementing the planning process.

Part II consisted of a community-based needs assessment and situation analysis. During this phase, more than 200 community members participated in many large and small consultations, on the basis of which the following reports were produced.

1. The Rapid Program Review

This process consisted of interviews and meetings with all, programs and departments within the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation focused on: a) the current state of programs and services, b) challenges and barriers to program effectiveness, c) staff analysis of community realities and needs, and d) assessment of program capacity to address the present and anticipated future community needs. The findings of the Rapid Program Review are especially relevant to the implementation phase of the Comprehensive Community Plan, since much of the real work in important planning areas such as economic development and employment, housing, infrastructure development, health, elders, education, recreation, and child and family services will fall to the community program staff to implement in a combined effort with leadership, voluntary organizations and community members.

2. The Chippewas of the Thames Community Story

The Chippewas of the Thames Community Story is the story of what happened to our people in the past and our understanding of how that past has shaped who and what we are today. It is also the story of what is happening to us today (the present), in the lives of our children and youth, in our family and community relations, in our social and cultural life, and in the political and economic life both on and off the Reserve. But, the story would be incomplete without also talking about the future we want. What will our community look like when things we achieve our goals? From the Community Story, we will be able to see clearly where we need to go and what we need to do to get where we want to go.

As the process began, the story was held in many pieces, like a puzzle. Different people held different important pieces of the puzzle. The Community Story was a way for all of us to come together, to fit our pieces of the story into a larger whole that we can all share.

The Community Story process uses a medicine wheel framework to facilitate a highly interactive dialogue about:

- a. The wellbeing of COTT people, using four main questions:
 - i. What is going on in the life of COTT children, youth, women, men and elders? How healthy and strong are their families?
 - ii. What can we learn from the past that can help COTT individuals and families fulfill their potential for balanced, happy and prosperous lives?
 - iii. What will things be like in a positive future for COTT individuals and families?
 - iv. What are the steps that can be taken to support the realization of this positive future?
- b. Prosperity and the wellbeing of our community, again using four main questions:
 - i. What is going on in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the COTT First Nation? Are the community's programs, services and infrastructure meeting the needs of individuals and families? Is the community managing its natural resources in a way that contributes to present-day prosperity without compromising the wellbeing of future generations?
 - ii. What can we learn from the past that can help the COTT First Nation achieve greater wellbeing and prosperity?
 - iii. What will things be like in a positive future for the COTT First Nation in terms of how we function as a community and Nation?
 - iv. What are the steps that can be taken to support the realization of this positive future?



The input for the COTT Community Story was gathered between September and November 2011 through a series of small and large community meetings. Every age group and segment of the community was represented, and significant efforts were made to include any and all who wished to make a contribution to the discussion.

3. *The Community Story Meeting*

In September 2011, a day-long open community meeting was held attended by about 75 participants, who worked in small groups focused on twelve themes.

- ❖ Children
- ❖ Youth
- ❖ Women
- ❖ Men
- ❖ Elders
- ❖ Family Life
- ❖ Political Life & Governance
- ❖ Social Life
- ❖ Economic Life
- ❖ Culture & Spirituality
- ❖ Infrastructure
- ❖ Lands & Environment

Each working group looked their theme through three distinct lenses: 1) **the Present** - what is life like now in the area?, 2) **the Past** - what was life like in the past in the area, and what can we learn from that past?, and 3) **the Future** - what would a good and healthy future look like in this theme area. More than 150 pages of notes from this meeting were compiled into a report called the Chippewas of the Thames Community Story 2011.

The first draft of that report circulated to community members, and in late November 2011 **three community verification meetings** were held, two on the Reserve and one in London to give community members multiple opportunities to comment on the draft. After the verification comments were incorporated, the final draft of the COTT Community Story was tabled in early December 2011.

Getting Ready to Make a Plan

Based on the **Community Story**, the COTT Senior Management Team, in consultation with Chief and Council agreed that eight (8) distinct categories of planning would be included in the Comprehensive Community Plan. These areas are listed and defined below.

COTT Community Planning Domains

1. **Health and Wellness**

Health refers to mental, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing. Wellness refers to the values, choice making and patterns of living that lead to health. This component of the comprehensive community plan considers the full range of health and wellness related determinants, issues, needs, solutions and services that have to be addressed in order to support the health and wellness of Chippewas of the Thames.

2. Social and Cultural Development

Social Development refers to: a) the challenge of fostering social cohesion and unity between people, families and groups within the community and strengthening the community's collective capacity to think and act together for common purposes; b) promoting strong, safe and healthy families and healthy child development; and c) strengthening the wellbeing of key demographics with the community; namely, children and youth, women, men and elders.

Cultural Development - "culture" refers to both the general beliefs and patterns of life that people actually live, as well as to the language, traditions, wisdom teachings, customs, beliefs, moral values, ideals, stories, music, arts, ceremonies, traditional ecological knowledge, technologies and general practices that make up the ideal-traditional culture systems of the past. Culturally based development is the process of translating and applying the knowledge and wisdom of the traditional past into lived patterns of thought and action in the modern world, as well as the collective community work of agreeing on shared values for guiding our community development.

3. Justice and Emergency Response

Justice refers to the maintenance of harmony and balance among the members of the community through the prevention of crime, the mediation of conflicts in ways that are fair and the restoration of harmony in cases where offences have been committed or conflicts are underway.

Emergency Response refers to the capability of all combined community resources and agencies to anticipate, prevent and effectively respond to fires, floods, natural disasters, catastrophic weather events, health emergencies, epidemics and other types of situations that could bring harm to people or property such that harm is minimized, people and property are protected, and mitigation of unavoidable damage or harm is undertaken in a timely and effective manner.

4. Life-long Learning

Life-long learning refers to the opportunities that COTT members have to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to live healthy, prosperous and fulfilling lives. This theme recognizes that learning happens at all stages of the life cycle from childhood to elderhood. It also acknowledges the value of supporting all members of the community to develop their gifts so as to enrich their personal lives, to contribute to the richness of family and community life and to achieve career aspirations. In keeping with this definition, this Chapter reflects on the important goals before the COTT community related to early childhood development; schooling in the primary to secondary grades; formal (e.g. accredited) adult education including literacy, up-grading, post-secondary and job skills courses; and a broad range of community informal learning opportunities that enhance life skills, social and recreational life, cultural knowledge and identity, as well as family and community life.

In practice, life-long learning can be thought of in terms of four inter-connected fields of activity: 1) early childhood learning and education, 2) primary and secondary schooling, 3) post-secondary education and employment training, and 4) non-formal learning for life (self-improvement, family life, community development, etc.).

5. Prosperity Development

The ultimate source of all wealth and prosperity is the earth. In the traditional past, people understood this because they lived directly off the land. The economic issues of today are very different, but the basic challenge is the same: how can COTT people earn a living by what they can harvest from the earth, produce or manufacture, sell or barter or by providing services to others? The COTT First Nation can be considered to be prosperous when its individuals and families can adequately meet their basic needs through viable economic activity, whether that be through employment or through entrepreneurship. As well, true prosperity will mean that the collective resources of the Nation (e.g., lands, capital and infrastructure) are utilized in ways that are consistent with sustainable stewardship and ethical practices while at the same time ensuring the prosperity and wellbeing of the present and future generations.

6. Infrastructure

Infrastructure refers to the built environment of the COTT First Nation. It includes basic utilities such as water, electricity, and waste management. It also includes housing and roads, as well as the buildings the community uses to support its programs and services such as the school, band office, and recreational centre. Infrastructure also refers to churches and other buildings owned by community groups and the facilities that may have been developed to support economic activities (such as a business incubator or land that has been serviced with access to utilities).

7. Land and Environmental Management

Ethical stewardship of the land and natural environment is based on the understanding that humans are part of the natural world and not separate from it. Ultimately, the land provides us with all that we need and its bounty must be shared among all of us. This means that we have the responsibility to manage our land and natural resources conscientiously to ensure that the way of life of the current generation does not harm the capacity of the land to meet the needs of future generations, as we seek new and creative ways of thinking about land as a lever and contributor to prosperity development.

8. Governance and Public Sector Management

Governance refers to the leadership and management of community decision making (including processes of grassroots community engagement in the governance process) as well as the oversight of various funds and resources of the First Nation, the protocols, processes and rules by which that leadership and management takes place, and the prevailing policies, priorities, activities and the working culture created by those entrusted with governance positions.

Public Sector Management refers to the policies and procedures that have been put in place to guide the operation of the community's administration, programs and services, as well as the on-the-ground reality of how administration, programs and services actually function on a day-to-day basis to address the primary purposes which they are meant to serve as defined by ongoing work-plans and accountability frameworks.

The Plan Production Process January – February 2012

1. The Four Worlds team compiled a very rough draft of each of these chapters based on the consultations with relevant COTT departments and entities, the Chief and members of Council, and of course, based heavily on the COTT community story outcomes. This first rough draft was tabled as a starting place for in-depth consultation in early February.
2. Each theme was assigned to a working group within COTTFN. Extensive meetings were held with each working group to consider: a) current realities and needs, b) appropriate goals (both long and short term), and c) best-bet short and long-term strategies for attaining each of the goals.
3. In March 2012 a second draft planning document was produced and tabled by the Four Worlds team which incorporated the extensive new thinking and refinement from the first rough draft.
4. A second round of working group consultation was held in April-May 2012, through which further refinements and additions were made to the plan.
5. A draft final version of the COTT Comprehensive Community Plan (entitled “We Make the Path by Walking it”) was tabled in mid-May 2012 for community review and consultation.

Next Steps

1. Input from the community review process will be incorporated into the plan.
2. Chief and Council will review the final draft and once it is refined to their satisfaction, they will adapt it with the understanding that although it looks forward to a 10-20 year horizon, the plan is always in draft. **It can always be changed, and should in fact be reviewed and updated annually.**

What’s in a Plan?

Nearly every Band office in Canada has dozens of studies collecting dust on their shelves that no one is implementing. To qualify as a real **plan**, a guide to future action has to be connected to the minds and hearts of community members. It has to belong to people who fully intend to carry it out. **A document is not a plan without this human connection.**

So, in order to develop and implement a truly viable Comprehensive Community Plan, a vibrant core group of community members, representing all important sectors of community life, needed to be engaged in the process of making the plan, and also need to be involved in implementing it. It has to be their plan. This core group needs to include representatives of Chief and Council and the Trustees of community funds, as well as all key departments and agencies, but also needs to include the voices of community elders, youth, women and men, including community members living off reserve in London, or wherever they may be.

What a Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) is and is not

A CCP is a general framework for guiding action. It is not a detailed work plan. In order to implement the CCP, the very next step (after the finalization of the framework) is to develop work plans with groups of implementers responsible for each of the 8 identified work areas.

We have presented this draft CCP with a planning horizon of ten years. This is not to ignore 15 to 20 year projections and needs, but rather to focus the plan on what actually needs to be done and what can be done now in order to address the opportunities, issues, needs and concerns the community has identified.

This plan will need to be revised and refined annually and completely renewed every 3 to 4 years, beginning again with a renewal of the Community Story process (which basically maps the needs and dynamics that must be addressed through development efforts).

The CCP always has a ten-year horizon. In 2012 the target completion year for all goals is 2022. In 2015, the target for completion for all goals (many of them refined or completely new from those of 2012) will be the year 2025. No matter what the year, the ten-year plan is always looking ten years ahead.

The Critical Importance of Measurement

The only way to tell if the plan COTTFN has made is leading the community to the outcomes that have been identified as goals, or if the implementation process is being carried out effectively, is to engage all participants in the plan in very frequent monitoring and evaluation processes. Whatever we measure tends to improve. For this reason monitoring and evaluation will be built into the implementation process from the very beginning. Implementation will be described in more detail in the final section of this Plan.

Always in Draft

A good plan is always in draft because the world is always changing. Unlike some concepts of strategic planning that try to lay out lock-step strategies to deal with issues that are months or even years in the future, this Comprehensive Community Plan is designed to be flexible, nimble and adaptive to ever-changing realities and conditions. The only way to really know if your plan is a good one is to implement it. As you do, you will soon find out: a) if you have the knowledge, skills and resources you need to carry out your plan effectively; and b) if your planned strategies and activities are actually leading to the results you want.

Change takes Time

Development takes time. It is not an instant-add-water-and-stir affair. There are long periods of seeming inactivity such as when the anxious gardener waits for the first signs of new seedlings breaking ground. There are setbacks. There are dramatic rushes of activity that appear to be significant, but the results of which, when the dust has settled, appear to amount to very little. And what appears to amount to very little can be of enormous and crucial importance when the potent process of time and the proper circumstances are combined.

The gestation period for a human fetus is nine months in the womb, and about twenty years after that. The time for the rebirth of a people falls into a similar category. The strategies outlined in this plan are not of the instant noodle soup variety. It will take time to learn how to effectively implement them, and more time for them to stimulate the growth and change in community outcomes the Plan calls for.

What we do know is that both the vision of change as well as the goals and strategies described in the COTT Comprehensive Community Plan have been tested and found to be effective and successful in many community settings, both in Aboriginal Canada and around the world. **The two greatest predictors of success in such a Plan are unity and systematic action. If the implementers of this Plan can remain united in their efforts and if they persevere in systematically testing and continuously refining the strategies they have devised, success is only a matter of time.**

CHAPTER ONE: HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Definition

Health refers to mental, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing. Wellness refers to the values, choice making and patterns of living that lead to health. This component of the comprehensive community plan considers the full range of health and wellness related determinants, issues, needs, solutions and services that have to be addressed in order to support the health and wellness of Chippewas of the Thames.

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

1. Overall community health and wellbeing has been declining for the past 40 years and continues to spiral downward. An estimated 80% of households are struggling with the impacts of intergenerational trauma leading to a number of specific healing issues, listed here in no particular order:

Mental and Social Health Issues

- a. Alcohol and drug abuse
- b. Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) and fetal alcohol effect (FAE)
- c. Sexual abuse (past and ongoing)
- d. Physical abuse (past and ongoing, especially, but not exclusively, of women and children)
- e. Psychological/emotional abuse
- f. Low self-esteem
- g. Dysfunctional families and interpersonal relationships
- h. Parenting issues such as emotional coldness, rigidity, neglect, poor communication and abandonment
- i. Suicide (and the threat of suicide)
- j. Teen pregnancy
- k. Chronic, widespread depression
- l. Chronic, widespread rage and anger
- m. Eating disorders
- n. Sleeping disorders
- o. Chronic physical illness related to spiritual and emotional states
- p. Layer upon layer on unresolved loss and grief
- q. Fear of personal growth, transformation and healing; i.e., being afraid to face the hurt of the past; afraid of change
- r. Post-residential school community environment, seen in patterns of paternalistic authority linked to passive dependency; patterns of misuse of power to control others, and community social patterns that foster whispering in the dark, but refusing to support and stand with those who speak out or challenge the status quo.

[Note: that for many of these issues, accurate statistics on the nature and extent of the problem have not yet been collected. What we know is that these issues are present in the community, and that they have been linked, in many Aboriginal community processes with intergenerational trauma.]

Chapter One: Health and Wellness, continued

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, continued

Physical Health Issues

- a. Diabetes
 - b. Obesity and overweight
 - c. Heart disease
 - d. Cancer
 - e. Asthma and chronic lung disease
 - f. Hypertension
 - g. Frequent colds and flus
 - h. Environmental sickness (from bad water, poor indoor air quality, mold, etc.)
2. Our priority health challenges that continue to be on the rise are sexual abuse, bullying, lateral violence, homelessness, alcohol and drug abuse, trust issues, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, suicide and obesity.
 3. Child and youth health is challenged by conditions they live with on a daily basis. 75% of the community's children are living in poverty, causing issues with physical and emotional health. Rates of overweight and obese children are increasing and limited access to healthy food and recreational activities is leading to diseases at a young age. A number of children and youth are facing serious health issue such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma and high blood pressure.
 4. In the last 40-50 years, lifestyles have grown dangerously unhealthy. 80% of children in the community are living in households where drug and alcohol abuse threaten their safety and wellbeing. 150 of 260 families on-Reserve have been named "at risk" in terms of child safety and wellbeing. Addiction in homes is leading to mental health issues for youth such as chronic depression, anger, early addictions, violence, etc. 85% of COTT's youth are involved in harmful behaviors and many youth are losing their self-respect, have low morale and self esteem, as well as low expectations for life achievements.
 5. A high level of violence in households is impacting the health of children and youth. At an early age, young people are turning to drugs and alcohol, lateral violence, sexual promiscuity and abuse. These choices negatively impact their families, education and employability. Women are experiencing high rates of domestic violence in the forms of physical and sexual abuse, leading to mental health issues and addictions.
 6. Excessive "social and economic bullying" as well as physical and emotional bullying at school and in the community is damaging the emotional and physical safety of young people. Youth feel unsafe with their peers, sad, alone and unhappy with no programs or people to turn to for help with this problem.
 7. Poverty is impacting women in the community. Young moms are common and they are often involved in drug and alcohol abuse, lack proper parenting skills and have inadequate access to proper food and shelter. Domestic violence also makes home life an unhealthy environment. These stressors contribute to low mental health and esteem in the women.

Chapter One: Health and Wellness, continued

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, continued

8. Many men have lost a sense of purpose in life. This demoralization has led many into unemployment, turning to drugs and alcohol to deal with chronic depression, anger and low self-esteem issues. This self-absorbed behavior is creating unsafe homes and hurting families. Men are feeling a lot of pain. The lack of male role modeling in the community is leaving children neglected and families broken.
9. Elders are feeling isolated and unsupported within the community. With the break down in the family structure, traditional values and cultural practices, elders are experiencing abuse, improper home care, limited access to health care and medications to help them with different chronic diseases and a loss of connection to spiritual practices and healing methods. Many elders are still living with the impacts of residential school trauma, some turning to addiction to numb the pain. Elders need support in healing through healing circles to share their stories and teachings from their struggles.
10. Many homes within the community are in poor condition, leading to health issues such as asthma, skin infections, respiratory infections and other chronic illnesses. 25% of homes have serious mould contamination and there is no plan in place to address this health hazard.
11. Water is not safe to drink in the community. A 'boil water advisory' has been in place for months. Action needs to be taken to provide adequate drinking water to the community.
12. Community health services are working hard but health issues related to poverty is still a big problem. The health department is constantly in crisis mode, leaving them with limited time for planning and prevention. The root causes of the "crisis" need to be dealt by: a) building staff capacity working in a healthy and sustainable environment where their own healing can take place, and b) engaging the community in health prevention strategies.
13. The big challenge the Health and Wellness team faces was once described by Lakota elder Phil Lane Senior as follows *"If somebody is running through our communities with a gun, shooting, killing and wounding people, someone has to patch up the wounded and bury the dead. But someone has to go after the gun. What are you going to do?"* COTT's health and human service providers have been working in crisis mode for a long time, hard pressed to keep up with the steadily increasing demands for help. The crisis is real. Many have died and many more are wounded.

The shift the Health and Wellness team now needs to make is the shift from being reactive to an ever intensifying crisis (i.e., patching up the wounded and burying the dead) to being very proactive and strategic about getting to the root of the overall crisis in Chippewas of the Thames (i.e., going after "the gun").

This is not an easy shift to make. In order to make it, there will need to be a re-organization of priorities and a re-distribution of human and financial resources towards the promotion of community healing and recovery.

Chapter One: Health and Wellness, continued

Goal #1: Initiate, develop and support a community healing and wellness movement in COTT that addresses addictions, abuse and the impacts of intergenerational trauma, and

- that fully engages community members
- that touches all age groups and walks of life
- that is professionally supported and guided
- that is anchored in traditional knowledge, wisdom and resources
- that is welcoming and comfortable for everyone, no matter what their religious, political or family convictions and beliefs may be.

Strategies:

1. **Four Inter-related lines of action** will be simultaneously developed: a) personal healing and recovery, b) family healing and development, c) school-based healing and wellness, and d) cultural and community value foundations developed and utilized to bring health.
2. **Build on what we do have** (i.e., the 20% of healthy people). Use their strength, knowledge, experience, role model engagement and participation to drive the development of a **volunteer community wellness core group**. This “core group” will consist of a solid core of people who are on a healing path and/or living a healthy life. It will arrange healthy activities and consciously reach out to include others. As the core group grows it will seek to positively influence community relationships and patterns (like widespread violence, abuse and bullying). The core group will be the main community guidance system for the healing movement, providing regular advice and council to everyone working on the healing process. To reach and engage the 20%, the Health and Wellness team will need dedicated community outreach workers. To keep the core group alive, regular monthly feasts, consultations and evenings of fun and togetherness will be organized. (Partners: Health and Wellness, CPNP)
3. **Form a “Professional Healing Team”** consisting of trained therapists and counselors (from the Health and Wellness department together with key professionals from other agencies and departments that have a mandate for working on healing and recovery issues in COTT) who will work together to guide, educate and support the healing of individuals, families and community systems. Utilizing a wide range of healing approaches and methods that fit the needs, including one-on-one counseling, small group work, peer support circles, and the use of non-conventional and traditional healing approaches. The Professional Healing Team will work as a **team** within the framework of a coordinated plan, and will take periodic measures of the effectiveness of their methods. As well, the Professional Healing Team will provide training and support to community volunteers who are helping with the healing work.
4. **Develop a volunteer healing and recovery team** (like a volunteer fire department) that is carefully selected, trained and coordinated to provide crisis intervention and healing support services to individual and families in need. This voluntary team will need to be supported and guided by the professional healing team. Ongoing coordination by staff as well as community recognition will be critical to success.
5. **Care for the caregivers.** In order to develop staff capacity for community healing and recovery, it will be necessary to put a strong “workplace wellness program” in place that concentrates on supporting staff to do their own healing and recovery work. Staff can’t bring to the community what they don’t have themselves. An effective staff wellness program will require dedicated time within departmental and individual work plans as well as professional leadership and guidance during an extended period of time.

Chapter One: Health and Wellness, continued

Strategies, continued:

6. **Engage and utilize traditional, culturally-based healing resources** as an integrated part of the community's healing movement. Work with traditional healers to ensure that their knowledge and services are made accessible to those who want and need their help. Collaborate with SOAHAC and other agencies with a mandate that supports this goal.
7. Taking into account strategies 1-6 above, **develop a comprehensive community wellness action plan** that entails engaging community members in making the plan and implementing it.
8. Ensure that all relevant departments have a role in the action plan and in supporting community healing and recovery as follows.
 - Education – 0-6 and K-12 healing and wellness for children and youth (see Chapter Four, Education for more details)
 - Child and Family Welfare – the agency responsible for child and family welfare should be engaged in developing an intervention focused on family healing and wellness
 - Youth – a specific initiative is needed for youth healing and wellness that engages youth through the arts, recreation and play, fitness and other appropriate doorways. Those professionals working in youth recreation should be supported by appropriate staff from other departments and by community volunteers.

Goal #2: Address chronic disease prevention through a focused campaign centered on food security

We recognize that there are inseparable links between poverty (and the deprivation that come with it such as lack of transportation, inability to afford healthy foods, etc.), healthy eating (i.e., the eating habits and choices people make, or are forced to make), and the presence of chronic diseases such as heart disease, obesity (OB-OW), diabetes and cancer among our people.

Strategies:

1. Implement a version of "Life Spin", and especially Life Spin "green program". Life Spin (in London, Ontario) provides "information and support for individuals surviving on low incomes" and support "the empowerment and self-development of these individuals in their efforts to attain self-sufficiency" (*From the "Life Spin" website, the "green program" is a **community guiding initiative.***)
2. Initiate and maintain a cooperative healthy foods buying program in COTT.
3. Implement the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) in COTT.
4. Encourage and support local food growing, processing and storage including the production of vegetables, fruits, poultry, eggs, beef and pork for local consumption.
5. Encourage and support traditional hunting, fishing and food sharing practices rooted in COTT culture and history.
6. Carry out an intensive **public education and social marketing campaign** promoting healthy eating.

Chapter One: Health and Wellness, continued

Strategies, continued:

7. Work with the COTT Social Welfare Reform process to help families to make the journey out of poverty, welfare dependency and ill-health to self-reliance, wellness and prosperity. Include food security and healthy eating in the health related curriculum for that program.
8. Encourage community participation in the revival of the ricing tradition, both as a food source and as a business.
9. Share stories of healthy role models (such as the COTT healthy elder who lives on less than \$100/month, hunts, gardens and doesn't see himself as "poor").

Goal #3: Stop bullying and lateral violence in our community

We recognize that bullying and violence are very widespread and that all ages and genders get bullied. We understand that children and youth are bullied at home, on the streets, at school, in public places—anywhere that bullies are encountered. We know that adults and even elders are bullied in the workplace, at home, in private and in public spaces.

We understand that bullying is creating incredible stress and harm to our people (and most especially to our children). That is why a "stop bullying" campaign is so essential to our community health and wellness.

Strategies:

1. A comprehensive public education and social marketing campaign focused on: a) understanding the harm bullying does, b) recognizing the signs of bullying, c) how to intervene and stop bullying when it is occurring, d) reporting bullying to authorities, and e) what to do if you are being bullied.
2. Backing up the communication efforts, the formation of an **anti-bullying and violence task force** authorized (by Chief and Council) to intervene, to stop bullying and to help both victims and perpetrators to heal.
3. The establishment of standards, policies, enforcement measures and consequences related to bullying and violence for the schools, COTT workplaces, public spaces and the community.
4. The translation of standards into community legislation that authorizes public intervention when needed.
5. The use of community justice circles to deal with cases of extreme bullying and violence.
6. The set-up of a community safe house for women, children and youth experiencing bullying.
7. The establishment of a peer helpers program to intervene to prevent bullying and violence, to stop it when it is occurring and to report it when necessary.

Chapter One: Health and Wellness, continued

Goal #4: Youth development

Engage COTT youth in a journey of self-discovery, healing, personal growth and safe, constructive development of their potential. Youth don't make or control the world they grow up in, and while the forces of peer pressure are very great, youth need healthy adults in their life to guide and support them. We understand that one strong, positive adult in a young person's life can result in resilience (from a bad environment) and good outcomes for youth.

Strategies:

1. Work in connection with the Departments of Social Development, Education and other relevant agencies to develop a comprehensive youth strategy. Clearly define the health and wellness components of that strategy, and work with other partners to ensure that those health related needs are effectively addressed in ways that are relevant to and connect with the youth population.
2. Build in mentorship and adult support as a key success element in a healthy youth initiative.

Goal #5: Ensure that all key COTT infrastructure is "healthy", i.e., that it promotes and supports health

Specifically address the issues of clean drinking water, safe housing (from mould and other hazards), adequate lighting on roads and public spaces and safe roads and traffic patterns.

Strategies:

1. Work with appropriate COTT agencies to find solutions to infrastructure related health issues.
2. Develop criteria for assessing the level of seriousness of infrastructure challenges and publish a quarterly report card.
3. Develop interventions and mitigation strategies for each major infrastructure health challenge. (E.g., for safe water, until the water system is replaced, a "boil water advisory" needs to be supplemented with additional alternatives such as water purification tablets, or home based purification systems.)

Chapter One: Health and Wellness, continued

Summary of Indigenous Community Determinants of Health¹

The aforementioned strategies for Chippewas of the Thames require a coordinated plan that aims to address the determinants of health and thereby supports the community to reach its maximum health and wellbeing potential. A “determinant” is like a root cause. It determines whether or not or to what extent people will be healthy. Improvement on the determinants of health will bring improvement in overall health outcomes. The following fourteen basic determinants of wellbeing, identified in common by many Indigenous communities,² are an integrated and interdependent web of factors rather than unrelated lines of action. It must be recognized that these are not solely “health” determinants, but that they show that healthy outcomes are dependent on other factors such as social development or prosperity.

The community health status relative to the following determinants needs to be defined (in terms of the local community standard of wellbeing), measured and assessed (in terms of current realities and conditions), and analyzed in terms of what is needed to transform health conditions.

1. Basic physical needs
2. Spirituality and a sense of purpose
3. Life-sustaining values, morals and ethics
4. Safety and security
5. Adequate income and sustainable economics
6. Adequate power
7. Social justice and equity
8. Cultural integrity and identity
9. Community solidarity and social support
10. Strong families and healthy child development
11. Healthy ecosystem and a sustainable relationship between human beings and the natural world
12. Critical learning opportunities
13. Adequate human services and social safety net
14. Meaningful work and service to others

¹ Communities with which we (Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning) have worked and which have contributed to this synthesis include the Little Shuswap First Nation in British Columbia, the Navajo Nation and the San Felipe Pueblo in New Mexico, the Inuit communities of Coral Harbour and Rankin Inlet in Canada's Arctic, and the Métis communities of Beauval and Pinehouse Lake in Saskatchewan, Sagamok Anishnawbek near Sudbury, Ontario, as well as participants in Four Worlds Summer Institutes between 1994 and 1997 (some 300-500 people each year representing more than 100 First Nations communities across North America). This section is represented from “Recreating the World: A Practical Guide to Building Sustainable Communities” by Michael Bopp and Judie Bopp (2006), Four Worlds Press, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

² Of course, the language used to identify the various determinants, as well as the organization of concepts (such as putting all physical needs in a single category instead of listing some of them separately), differed from place to place. Nevertheless, we believe this articulation of the determinants reflects a very widely agreed upon set of concepts across many communities, and as such, constitutes a useful synthesis.

CHAPTER TWO: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Definition

Social Development refers to: a) the challenge of fostering social cohesion and unity between people, families and groups within the community and strengthening the community's collective capacity to think and act together for common purposes; b) promoting strong, safe and healthy families and healthy child development; and c) strengthening the wellbeing of key demographics with the community; namely, children and youth, women, men and elders.

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

Community Wellness and Cohesion

1. COTT is impacted with divisions, fault lines and unresolved hostilities that sometimes go back several generations or more. These divisions are especially evident at key times in the life of the community, such as elections, periods of crisis or during community consultations such as the Bear Creek process, and can show up as fights between youth or certain families, splits between prominent leaders or deep divisions between factions over key issues. **The lack of unity is weakening the community's ability to come together over key development challenges.**
2. Poor mental health and addictions are seriously impacting the safety, health and wellbeing of many families and children. An estimated 80% of COTT households are struggling with the impacts of addictions, violence, abuse and other outcomes of inter-generational trauma. This is, at least in part, linked to residential school trauma that has been carried over for several generations.
3. Physical and sexual abuse are serious issues and no one wants to talk about them.
4. Mnaasged have "red flagged" 150 out of 256 houses in COTT where children are believed to be "at risk"; i.e., in which there is a good reason to believe that children are not safe due to circumstances in the home. Mnaasged say they have "no time and no budget" for prevention and family development work, and yet their own mandate says they have that responsibility.
5. Current mental health, addictions and social welfare services all focus on getting people through whatever current crisis they may be experiencing, but none of them are effective at engaging people in long-term healing and recovery work. In other words, root causes of reoccurring crisis are not being addressed.
6. Many community people have lost confidence in community services to be of any help to them. Breaches in confidentiality are seen as a big issue.

Families

7. Many COTT families are impacted by addiction, violence and abuse, and mental health challenges such as chronic depression or anger issues.
8. A very high proportion of COTT families are living in poverty with family income well below the Canadian government's official poverty line.

Chapter Two: Social and Cultural Development, continued

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, continued

9. With no hope in sight for jobs, many families have developed a pattern of dependency, reinforced with entitlement thinking. It's my "Indian right" to get a free house and income I don't have to work for. Why should I make efforts to get a job?
10. Many families are passing on unwellness and dependency patterns to their children, who are passing them onto their children...

Children and Youth

11. Lots of youth feel alone, isolated, with "no one to talk to".
12. Many youth feel unsafe. They fear violence, bullying, drug dealing, impaired driving, unsafe homes, conflict with other youth, even infrastructure that makes you sick, such as bad water or moldy houses.
13. Youth culture is not supportive ("my friends don't care what happens to me").
14. 80% or more youth are using alcohol and/or drugs to serious levels which could bring harm to themselves or others.
15. Antler River School doesn't prepare youth adequately for high school. "We are only 40% prepared..."
16. There are fewer jobs for boys than girls, but more jobs for all youth are needed.
17. "Us youth need our dreams supported."
18. Many youth have unresolved healing needs.
19. Youth lack cultural, spiritual and moral guidance, as well as hope for the future.
20. Many children live in fear of bullying everyday. They fear to go to school or even to leave their own homes.
21. Junior youth (age 10-14) are the most vulnerable to bad role models (i.e., older youth) and also the most susceptible to positive change through good programming. Changes made during the junior youth period of life can be life-long.
22. No focused opportunities for healing or learning for health and wellness are available for our youth. School should be a safe haven and a healing place.
23. Children and youth are not learning about their own culture, heritage and identity, so many grow up not knowing who they are and are therefore more vulnerable to racism and identity confusion when they go to school off-reserve.
24. Parents tend to stop supporting their kids in school after grade nine.
25. Single mothers are particularly vulnerable to addictions, abuse, poverty, etc.

Chapter Two: Social and Cultural Development, continued

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, continued

Elders

27. Many elders feel lonely and isolated, and lack opportunities to share their knowledge and experience with younger people. Elder abuse (usually by their children and grandchildren or other relatives) causing physical harm or resulting in theft of money, medicines, food and other personal possessions is occurring. Now many elders are afraid to live alone.
28. Many elders experienced residential school or other traumas and have not had the chance to heal.

Goal #1: Greatly strengthen to bonds of unity, solidarity, trust, respect, love and caring across all fault-lines in COTT, and develop effective processes for healing community relationships

Strategies:

1. Introduce and utilize talking circles as a primary tool for giving each person the opportunity to speak, be heard and respected from the heart. To accomplish this, many small circles will be organized and held across the community: a) in people's homes, b) in public buildings, c) in the workplace, and d) sponsored by various organizations and groups. These circles will focus on themes related to healing, family and community development.
2. A team of circle volunteer facilitators will be recruited, trained and offered to anyone who wants support in organizing and running circles.
3. Monthly community-building feasts and gatherings will be held in which all will be encouraged to participate. Each of these gatherings will have three critical components: a) **Inspirational** – prayers and inspirational stories and teachings calling participants to “higher ground” in the work of community development, b) **Consultation** – talking together about things that matter, and c) **Food and fun**, to uplift the spirits and bring happiness to the gathering.

These gatherings have the potential to become the heartbeat of community development. Their regularity and strength will become attractive to many who have stayed away from or on the margins of community life for years. A spirit of true respect and fellowship should permeate the meetings. They should be so attractive, feel so good to attend and be so much fun that no one would ever want to miss one.

4. In recognition of our cultural heritage which teaches us that we are all Aunties and uncles and cousins and brothers and sisters to one another and not just “workers” and “clients”, we connect ourselves to re-learning how to be professional service providers with our people such that we trust everyone as our relatives, and see ourselves as family members in relation to those we serve. This best-practice service ideally will be gradually infused into everything we do through ongoing training, coaching, mentoring and participatory evaluation. It will gradually impact how we think about, talk with, and intervene in the lives of family and every individual we work with.
5. Volunteer encouragement and recognition will be systematically built into every program initiative. As well, we will hold volunteer honorary and recognition events such as the annual volunteer recognition dinner at least twice a year.

Chapter Two: Social and Cultural Development, continued

Goal #2: Create a “circle of services” that brings together all the human service agencies in COTT, and use it to weave together a seamless web of services, incentives and support that assists our people in their journey toward empowerment, self-reliance, health and prosperity.

Strategies:

1. Utilizing the “stepping stones” model as a starting point, we will create an inter-agency collaborative that breaks down the silos and shares: a) the same clients and client information, b) case conferencing to develop the best possible strategies for each family or person, c) a single “gathering” hub for intake, assessment, etc., and d) an integrated plan for each person or family.
2. Specifically, Ontario works, social development, Mnasged, Health and Wellness, Education, Early Childhood, Addiction, Social Assistance, and Training and Employment will all work together as a collaborative.
3. A focus in working with people will be **empowerment** of the person or the family through life-path planning and support to achieve their goals, with support from all relevant programs. We will encourage a shift in the way the people see us and themselves from

- Clients to → Co-participants
- Passive recipients of benefits to → Active builders and solution finders (i.e., social agents)
- Objects toward whom programs are directed to → Subjects who author their own journey

To do this, people and families must make plans, carry out action and evaluate results with support, education and training and lots of respect and love. Where it seems wise and effective to do so, we will develop and offer incentives that encourage and reward the positive steps on the journey that people make.

Goal #3: Develop and implement a healthy families initiative that engages COTT families on a journey toward sustainable wellness, self-reliance and prosperity, and through which children and youth are able to receive the attention, guidance and safe environment they need to flourish.

Strategies:

1. Identify natural clusters of 2-3 or more families which can support one another in progressing toward health, safety, and prosperity for all family members. Ensure that the health strengths and weaknesses within each natural cluster (or in some cases clan grouping) are balanced and mutually beneficial for all participants.

Chapter Two: Social and Cultural Development, continued

Strategies continued:

2. **Develop an intervention protocol that guides a professional family development team** to engage families in a constructive process of healing and family improvement, while ensuring safety and wellbeing of children. Utilize COTT culture and community values to guide this work.
3. **Design and offer a life-path development program** that provides families who choose to participate:
 - a) **Learning opportunities** related to: i) personal growth and healing, ii) identity and cultural foundation, iii) life-skills, iv) healthy family dynamics, v) employment readiness and vi) job skills training and placement.
 - b) **Healing opportunities** related to: i) one-on-one therapeutic counseling, ii) family therapy, and iii) addictions recovery and support.
 - c) **Peer support** related to participation in a wider circle of peer-families working on family enhancement.
 - d) **Economic opportunities** related to training, guidance and support in improving the prosperity of the family through employment or business, and secure, stable housing for all (with home ownership an attainable goal for many).
4. **Building on success.** Some families have developed very effective strategies for various issues and challenges that are creating obstacles for many other families. This “positive deviance” from the norm represents an opportunity for learning and change. We will systematically support and encourage these families while at the same time working closely with them to learn and understand how they are managing to do what they do, even though they have many of the same barriers and challenges as all the other families.

Goal #4: Develop and implement a comprehensive youth strategy that engages COTT youth in

- healing and personal growth
- cultural foundations and identity learning
- healthy social and recreational opportunities that meets the full spectrum of interests, needs, and age appropriate capabilities
- the need for spiritual and moral guidance and character development
- the need for safety, security and freedom from bullying and intimidation
- economic opportunities
- learning for life, including parenting, life-skills, citizenship and employment skills
- opportunities to serve others and contribute to a better community and a better world

Strategies:

1. **Youth Consultation** – hold a series of consultations with both junior youth (ages 11-14) and youth (ages 15-20) to engage them in planning, developing and implementing youth led social, recreational and learning activities.
2. **Around this core of youth led initiatives we will add program driven opportunities related to the full spectrum of needs** (as described in the goal). Such activities could include: a) healing, b) cultural and identity learning, c) employment or small business training, d) travel club, e) spiritual, values and moral learning, f) life-skills training, g) parenting, and h) a wide-range of recreational opportunities related to fitness and sports, land and nature-based activities, theatre, music and arts, on-line social networking, drumming, singing, beading, etc. These activities will be carried out by appropriate, programs and departments with the framework of a comprehensive youth strategy.

Chapter Two: Social and Cultural Development, continued

Strategies continued:

3. **Adult mentors, volunteers and program leaders** – a wide-range of volunteer male and female mentors will be recruited (like big brothers and big sisters) to spend time with children and youth in their formative years. Volunteer adult program leaders will work with the various activities according to their interest and capabilities.
4. **Action research to develop youth prevention early warning signs.** We know that as the lives of our youth “go off the rails”, there are early warning signs (which some call “keystone moments”) that *indicate* that something is wrong. In urban context factors such as school truancy, anti-social behaviour, persistent use of alcohol and drugs, or running away from home are examples of an impending crisis or problem. We want to prevent serious addictions, teen pregnancies, being the victim or perpetrator of violence, sexual and physical abuse, depression and other mental health challenges, and dropping out of school. Many of these problems are early warning signs or keystone events. We will identify these through a participatory action research initiative in which youth are engaged as experts and co-researchers.
5. These activities will require: a) having a skilled and experienced youth program leader and at least two workers (1 male, 1 female) with an operations budget and designated spaces to work in, and b) collaboration and commitment of staff time and energy on the part of all those programs and agencies that have a mandate to serve the COTT youth population in any way. These collaborators will include Health and Wellness, Economic Development, Ontario Works and Employment and Training, as well as Church leaders and Cultural leaders. Designated representatives from each department will serve as part of the **Youth Strategy team**.
6. Youth program activities will need to be scheduled for evenings and weekends, which means that program staff working hours will need to be scheduled for the times when youth actually need the services.

Goal #5: All social development programs will be designed and implemented to support COTT community member empowerment, and the shift from dependency to self-reliance, as well as from being a passive recipient of programs and benefits to being an actual co-author of opportunities and benefits.

Strategies:

1. A strong emphasis will be placed on the active participation of the intended beneficiaries of programs and services in identifying issues and challenges, and in finding solutions and solving problems. This will be accomplished in different ways, but will always entail engaging the participants in planning and evaluating the activities and guiding program staff in continuous program improvement.

Chapter Two: Social and Cultural Development, continued

Definition

Cultural Development - “culture” refers to both the general beliefs and patterns of life that people actually live, as well as to the language, traditions, wisdom teachings, customs, beliefs, moral values, ideals, stories, music, arts, ceremonies, traditional ecological knowledge, technologies and general practices that make up the ideal-traditional culture systems of the past. Culturally based development is the process of translating and applying the knowledge and wisdom of the traditional past into lived patterns of thought and action in the modern world, as well as the collective community work of agreeing on shared values for guiding our community development.

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

1. Many COTT people have lost a connection to the Creator, and to life-preserving, life-enhancing values, such as respect, sharing, caring, honesty, courage, humility and perseverance. Many people are too busy, too cynical, or too immersed in unhealthy pursuits.
2. At the same time, COTT is experiencing a cultural revival. Traditional Teachings, practices and ceremonies are being revived and more and more people are becoming involved in these.
3. There is a renewed interest in learning our Ojibwe language. Some people are regaining understanding about natural resources.
4. There is serious concern that some of our rich cultural history and heritage will be lost if it is not preserved through documentation or passed on orally. This is especially true for the old stories and in-depth descriptions of what the Seven Grandfather teachings really mean. As our elders move on to the next world, much of this knowledge could be lost if it is not preserved.
5. There are long-standing and deep divisions between individuals and families who practice traditional spirituality and some Christians. This division can be quite harsh. People on both sides have been deeply hurt by things that have been said and done in the past. There is a strong desire with the COTT community to heal these wounds, and to find ways of living together in mutual respect and love. “We are a community of various cultures and we need to recognize the diversity and respect each other’s choices in regards to religion and way of life.” “We need to build on (our) common heritage and thrive on the richness of all of our sacred teachings as we work together as one people to develop our future for our children and grandchildren.”
6. Many families are raising children today without the benefit of any spiritual or moral teachings. The school curriculum does not adequately cover these topics.
7. We have groups in our community (the alternative school, lodge keepers, churches) who are reaching out to fill this gap. Most children are not yet being reached.
8. Part of our history is a story of failed assimilation. We tried to “blend-in” to White society, but it didn’t work. Now we are trying to reclaim our traditions, not to go backwards, but to regain a sense of pride and identity. During that journey, we learned to doubt ourselves and to be ashamed of who we are. Now we need to de-colonize our thinking and our spirit. This is a deep and necessary part of community healing and development.

Chapter Two: Social and Cultural Development, continued

Goal #1: Develop a comprehensive statement of COTT values, customs and wisdom teachings through a public process of consultation and consensus building among key stakeholders from across the full spectrum of beliefs and traditions.

Goal #2: Utilize the statement of values as a guide in the development of school curriculum, community healing programs, social development, justice, land claims settlements, governance development and other relevant community initiatives.

Strategies:

1. Hold a series of community consultations involving both Anishnawbek traditional, spiritual and cultural leaders as well as Christian pastors and community representatives to identify the values and teachings that all traditions have to offer as *our common heritage* and which we can utilize to educate our children and guide our community's healing and development.
2. From these consultations, develop a clear written statement of values, principles and teachings that we agree on and are willing to utilize for community healing and development. Ensure that the unique and beautiful diversity of expression of our values is incorporated into the statement, so that both the Anishnawbek traditional path and the Christian path are well represented and expressed without in any way negating anyone's point of view.

Goal #3: Develop a comprehensive curriculum with versions for children and for adult community members focused on learning COTT history and cultural heritage, and providing opportunities for hands-on experience through which learners can be exposed to cultural teachings and resources, and can strengthen their Indigenous identity.

Strategies:

1. **Form a cultural curriculum development task force**, with representatives from traditional societies and groups practicing with the community, as well as representatives from COTT education to develop an outline of content to be included in a comprehensive cultural heritage curriculum.
2. Utilize external Anishinabek resources with experience in developing learning programs around these topics.
3. Engage a curriculum writer, to produce curriculum materials on such topics as the Anishnawbe creation and other teaching stories, the seven grandfather teachings, the medicine wheel, the web of life, the history of treaties and their impact on Anishnawbek culture, etc.
4. At least three levels of curriculum material will be developed. (Level one for ages 5-10, Level two for ages 10-15, Level three for ages 15+)
5. All materials will be pilot tested before they are published.
6. This project will be staged over a five-year period.

CHAPTER THREE: JUSTICE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Definition

Justice refers to the maintenance of harmony and balance among the members of the community through the prevention of crime, the mediation of conflicts in ways that are fair and the restoration of harmony in cases where offences have been committed or conflicts are underway.

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

Justice

1. Some members of the COTT First Nation do not always feel safe. Here are the specific contexts within which people fear for their own safety.
 - a. A significant number of children suffer almost daily from fear, anxiety, and emotional and/or physical abuse that is the result of bullying on the part of older, stronger children or even adults. For some children, every time they have to go where there are other children (e.g. in homes, on the roads, at school, on the school bus, in recreation programs) can be traumatizing. This means that school can be a frightening and dangerous place.
 - b. Domestic violence and other types of abuse at the hands of intimate partners is still experienced by women in the community. In the past, people tended to turn a blind eye to violence in the home, but it is now more common to speak out against such abuse and to call the police when it occurs.
 - c. Elders do not always feel safe either. They are sometimes bullied or robbed by individuals who want their money, their personal possessions that can be pawned or their medications.
2. Policing programs in the community are described as “ineffective” or “completely absent” as they apply to protecting the personal safety of children and elders from the types of abuse described above. As well, the general perception is that police are hardly seen in the community. Female officers seem to be doing their job more consistently than their male counterparts.
3. Our own community members who are drug dealers are threatening the safety and wellbeing of other community members, especially youth.
4. Victims and other community members are not willing to testify against abusers, and offenders are therefore free to offend again. People are hesitant to get involved.
5. Elders used to play a more prominent role in mediating disputes and maintaining harmony in the community. As elders get more and more sidelined in community affairs, this resource is being lost.

Chapter Three: Justice and Emergency Response, continued

Goal #1: All members of COTT First Nation will live free from fear, intimidation, violence, bullying and abuse of all kinds. Community members will be committed and engaged in achieving and maintaining a bullying, violence and abuse-free community and in contributing to crime prevention and other community justice initiatives.

Strategies:

1. **Mount a community-wide education/awareness program** aimed at changing community norms about the acceptability of all forms of interpersonal violence and at educating people about their personal rights to safety and about the steps that can be taken to report/stop violence in the community specifically carried out: a) bullying at home, at school, in the workplace and in the community, b) sexual abuse prevention, detection and intervention, c) elder abuse prevention, detection and intervention, and d) alcohol and drug abuse prevention, healing and recovery.

Goal #2: A Community Justice Initiative will spearhead programming related to crime prevention, victims services, restorative justices, support for victims and offenders and community policing.

Strategies:

1. **Establish a COTT Community Justice Council** to develop and coordinate the development and implementation of a **Community Justice Plan**

The Justice Council will connect all relevant service agencies, including Health and Wellness, Education, Social Development, Economic Development, Ontario Works, Police, Child and Family (John Howard Society), as well as elders, youth representatives, men and women representatives, spiritual and cultural leaders and Chief and Council.

2. To **appoint a community justice coordinator** who will work with all the professional and volunteer actors who are part of the justice strategy to ensure that the community justice plan is being carried out, is regularly maintained and evaluated, and is refined and improved as needed to achieve justice related goals of the Comprehensive Community Plan.
3. Conduct a cultural/historical research project that documents traditional knowledge/teachings that can contribute to maintaining the safety and security of the Nation's people, for solving conflicts in ways that maintain/restore harmony, for protecting the safety and rights of victims of crime and to ensuring that court and corrections services support the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders.
4. Develop ongoing justice programming on the basis of the cultural research project described above that includes at least the following components: a) crime prevention, b) support services for victims, c) restorative justice programming for offenders, and d) dispute resolution mechanisms for such issues as conflict over land ownership or use (i.e., mediation services).
5. Work collaboratively with the Health Department to address justice issues that have their roots in substance abuse and other types of personal and family wellness.
6. To maintain an effective balance in program strategies between: a) positive prevention activities, b) enforcement, and c) rehabilitation.
7. Link the COTT Justice Council and strategy to the **London District Justice taskforce** and secretariat with a specific aim of coordinating with their efforts, benefiting from the work they are doing, and avoiding duplication.

Chapter Three: Justice and Emergency Response, continued

Strategies continued:

8. Develop and implement **Community Justice Circles** as a restorative justice alternative to the regular court process.
9. Access, and where needed **develop alternative rehabilitation strategies** based on community and culturally appropriate options and resources.

Goal #3: End bullying and abuse in COTT.

Strategies:

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive anti-bullying and lateral violence campaign with the following components: a) continuous and always evolving communication and public education, b) targeting all age groups and all locations where bullying happens, i.e., home, school, workplace, community, and on the web, c) a yellow ribbon campaign that utilizes peer helpers that intervene in and mitigate the impacts of bullying, d) utilize legislation and public policy to create clear consequences for all forms of bullying, violence and abuse including cyber-bullying, and e) engage community artists, musicians, writers, etc. to develop effective messaging for a comprehensive campaign.
2. Develop a strength-based support and recovery program for the victims of bullying and their families including cyber-bullying.
3. Develop a strength-based health and recovery program for bullies that can be implemented in the school or in the community.
4. Develop a case conferencing approach to dealing with incidences of bullying that involves police, social services, child protection, education and other relevant actors.

Goal #4: Greatly strengthen the effectiveness of Community Policing in COTT.

Strategies:

1. As part of the overall justice strategy, work with the police service to address their challenges and barriers to effective community policing, specifically: a) the need for more staff (because currently they are unable to meet the need for response calls, let alone to undertake pro-active policing), b) the need for a much more visible presence in a centrally located office with clear signage (now they are hidden away from view), and c) the budget shortfalls that prevent them investing in preventative policing activities.
2. Establish a COTT Police Commission or committee to oversee, advise and guide the development of policing in COTT.
3. Hold a community forum on policing to move past complaining about the problems to focusing on finding solutions that involve community engagement in crime prevention and support of police response efforts. Specifically consider models such as neighbourhood watch, block parents, crime stoppers, and use of facebook and other e-media as a communication tool.

Based on this consultation process, **develop a community protection and policing strategy** aimed at improving overall policing outcomes, with specific attention to response times, reporting protocols, and citizen participation in community protection.

Chapter Three: Justice and Emergency Response, continued

Goal #5: Develop a process through which rehabilitated individuals with criminal records can obtain a pardon, or otherwise have their record cleared so that their lifelong ability to obtain employment is not jeopardized.

Strategies:

1. Consult legal experts and appropriate Aboriginal agencies to decide on the possible pathways for achieving this goal, and then develop a community friendly process through which individuals can be supported to clear their records.

Definition

***Emergency Response** refers to the capability of all combined community resources and agencies to anticipate, prevent and effectively respond to fires, floods, natural disasters, catastrophic weather events, health emergencies, epidemics and other types of situations that could bring harm to people or property such that harm is minimized, people and property are protected, and mitigation of unavoidable damage or harm is undertaken in a timely and effective manner.*

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

Emergency Response

1. The COTT emergency response plan was made in 2004, revised in 2006, (approved by Chief and Council) and now needs updating.
2. COTT has no agreement with INAC to cover costs related to emergency response or disaster relief and recovery, which makes us vulnerable to incurring huge costs in case of a disaster for clean up, repair, recovery and compensation.
3. We do have a pandemic plan made by our Health and Wellness department in 2011.
4. While we have plans in place, community members are not aware of the plans, and responders are not trained to implement them.
5. There is no communication plan as to how people will know what to do in case of a disaster or emergency.
6. There is a need to utilize the fire department for more services than fire/Rescue, such as Medical Emergencies, simply because COTT does not have the full range of emergency services that might be found in a larger center.

Goal #1: Update the COTT Emergency Response Plan, complete with clear protocols for declaring a state of emergency, stated lines of authority that are automatically involved in case of emergency or crisis, a detailed plan for engaging all allied agencies if the need arises, a community evacuation plan, including alternate routes in case main roads are blocked, and a public communication plan which ensures that *all* community members can be informed of how to respond in case of any emergency and testing the plan.

Chapter Three: Justice and Emergency Response, continued

- Goal #2: Community-wide education and awareness program.** Develop and implement an ongoing and continuous program of public education and awareness related to fire prevention, home safety and how to get information or help in case of an emergency.
- Goal #3: Appoint a Community Emergency Management Coordinator.** This position would combine the work of a chief fire officer and an emergency response coordinator, and would oversee all aspects of emergency response work, including the critically important role of recruiting and training volunteers. This would be the go-to person in case of any emergency.
- Goal #4 Establish a Community Emergency Response Group.** This group would include responders trained in all aspects of emergency case management, and who could be mobilized to carry out the COTT Emergency Response Plan as needed.
- Goal #5 Greatly strengthen the effectiveness of community Fire Protection in COTT.** work with the fire department to address their challenges and barriers toward community fire/rescue services, specifically: a) the need for more staff and continual turn-over of volunteers, as show-up for calls at times are low making it unsafe for those present to do their job, b) the budget shortfalls that prevent them from investing in activities that provide the safety that is demanded for their job, (e.g.: testing equipment as recommended by manufacturer, or available equipment), c) representation within the committee structure within Council, d) expand the usefulness of this great resource for the betterment of the community.

CHAPTER FOUR: LIFE-LONG LEARNING

Definition

Life-long learning refers to the opportunities that COTT members have to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to live healthy, prosperous and fulfilling lives. This theme recognizes that learning happens at all stages of the life cycle from childhood to elderhood. It also acknowledges the value of supporting all members of the community to develop their gifts so as to enrich their personal lives, to contribute to the richness of family and community life and to achieve career aspirations. In keeping with this definition, this Chapter reflects on the important goals before the COTT community related to early childhood development; schooling in the primary to secondary grades; formal (e.g. accredited) adult education including literacy, up-grading, post-secondary and job skills courses; and a broad range of community informal learning opportunities that enhance life skills, social and recreational life, cultural knowledge and identity, as well as family and community life.

In practice, life-long learning can be thought of in terms of four inter-connected fields of activity: 1) early childhood learning and education, 2) primary and secondary schooling, 3) post-secondary education and employment training, and 4) non-formal learning for life (self-improvement, family life, community development, etc.).

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

1. Low expectations of children at home. Many children are not asked to do chores and not encouraged to work hard in school.
2. Many homes where children live (70%) use alcohol and drugs, and have high levels of violence, abuse, and neglect. Family wellness is an important key to child and youth wellness.
3. Children are bringing social problems (hurt, anger, sadness, trauma, etc.) to school and are causing “behavior” problems. There are no comprehensive healing and wellness programs in the school.
4. Early childhood programs are providing a positive and loving support system for younger children, and are working with families to strengthen their ability to provide the kind of care young children need.
5. Many children enter Antler River School testing on par for their age group, but by grade two they are already falling behind their counterparts in the rest of the Province.
6. By grade six-seven, many students are 2-3 grade levels behind in basic skills and academic work. Social problems are very common.
7. High school students are not well prepared. Many of our graduates find they are far behind in academic subjects when they go to off-reserve schools.
8. High drop out rates in high school. Four out of twelve of our graduating students (from Antler River) who went to school off-reserve dropped out in the first year.
9. Bullying is a huge problem in the community and it is carried into the school. Many children live in fear everyday.

Chapter Four: Life-long Learning, continued

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, continued

10. Many children are growing up not knowing who they are, having no sense of their Native identity, no moral compass (i.e., right or wrong), and no guidance as to how to live their lives.
11. Most children are not learning the Ojibwe language, culture, history, or any practical crafts or skills coming out of our cultural heritage.
12. Agencies charged with the responsibility for child and youth health, wellbeing and safety are only sporadically working together with the school to improve the lives of children.
13. The school curriculum is oriented to future academic success, not to success in life. Now largely missing are life-skills, culture, language and identity learning, learning for health and wellness, COTT community citizenship learning, and vocational training.
14. There is no comprehensive education plan that we are following. There are old documents, but none are truly holistic, comprehensive or community based. We “took over” education in 1992, but we still have no real vision and no comprehensive plan up. It’s all ad-hoc. We just move from one crisis to the other.
15. Seriously inadequate funding is a big challenge. INAC education funding amounts to roughly 50% per child (i.e., what is paid to us) of what they would pay to neighbouring White schools to educate the same child.
16. Children are learning dependency thinking and poverty mentality from an early age. Many children and youth get everything for nothing, never have to work for anything, and very little to nothing is expected of them. They see their families waiting for others to take care of them, and in this way, life-long habits of helplessness and dependency thinking are engrained into them.
17. Low wages, low morale and a sense of always being in crisis mode make it hard to attract and retain good education staff.
18. The school has no developmental plan to address any of the core issues the educational leaders themselves identify (such as child health and wellness issues, lack of cultural education, lack of life-skills, poor academic outcomes, bullying, etc.).
19. Most of our young people will never go on to university or college. The majority of them need training for jobs or trades, which is now completely missing from our school curriculum and also not available on-reserve in any other form.
20. Our children and youth need coaches, mentors and elders to work with them out of school hours. There are some adults who are doing this now, but many children and youth are not connected to these activities. Learning for life-skills also happens in recreation, sports, arts and cultural programs.
21. Learning for life opportunities need to include learning related to: a) personal growth and healing, b) self-care, c) strengthening families, d) parenting, and e) participation in community development and politics.
22. Traditionally elders were important guides and educators to the next generation. This link has been broken in our community for many elders and also for many young people, both of whom are now cast adrift.
23. Many adult community members have learned to be ashamed of who we are (especially our past) and to doubt ourselves, and these feelings are a source of deep division among us. This thinking has penetrated into our minds and hearts. We need to de-colonize our thinking and our spirits. This is a deep but necessary part of nation building. We have to believe in ourselves as a people.
24. Our people need to learn about community development and our own political processes so they can be effective citizens, participants in community development and community leaders.

Chapter Four: Life-long Learning, continued

Goal #1: To undertake a comprehensive educational reform process aimed at redesigning and rebuilding community education in COTT to address the following.

- Child and youth health and wellness
- Parental engagement
- Cultural and identity foundations
- Academic success
- Education for life (life-skills, moral education, family life)
- Vocational training
- Education for COTT citizenship (treaties, Indigenous issues, community development)
- Adult education, training and continuing education

Strategies:

1. **Conduct a community-wide consensus building exercise** through which the fundamental values, principles, philosophy and beliefs for education are articulated for use in guiding educational development.
2. **Conduct a comprehensive community-based evaluation of education** that establishes a base-line for the performance of our system to date and lays out pathways for improvement.
3. Based on the two steps above and ensuring that all the above identified domains of learning are addressed, **develop a comprehensive educational plan** that includes: a) early childhood learning and education (0-6), b) K-12 (ages 6-18) learning and education, c) post-secondary education and training, and d) non-formal learning for life (self-improvement, family life, community life, etc.)
4. Based on the comprehensive educational plan (number 3 above) that is developed, **conduct a 360°evaluation of education staff and board capacity** (both the Education and Social Service Boards because the Social Service Board oversees early years education), oriented to what will be required to actually implement the plan that has been made.
5. Based on the human resource evaluation (number 4 above) **prepare a human resource development plan** to support staff, Education board members, Social Service Committee Board members and community volunteers to **learn their way** into the work of implementing the comprehensive educational plan. Ensure that capacity for promoting student health and wellness is part of the learning.
6. Based on the human resource plan that is developed, **design and deliver a staff development program** aimed at building the capacity of all those who are co-implementers of the comprehensive educational plan.
7. Begin **measuring and reporting quarterly to the community** on key indicators of progress related to such areas as: a) child and youth wellness levels, b) basic reading and math skills, c) academic performance and graduation rates, d) drop out and attendance rates, and e) school atmosphere.

Chapter Four: Life-long Learning, continued

Goal #2: Create a community-wide culture of encouragement that supports and encourages life-long learning.

Strategies:

1. Develop and implement a student ambassador community leadership program that promotes community engagement and support for education and life-long learning.
2. **Conduct a social marketing/public awareness campaign** that promotes self-development and learning as a primary purpose of life, and a primary pathway to improved life circumstances and outcomes.
3. Shift the Antler River School from being a children's day school only to being a "community school", i.e., a resource that is used in the day for children and in the evening for adult and continuing education.
4. Create a special fund to provide financial assistance to off-reserve members for continuing education.

Goal #3: To improve basic skills and academic outcomes of COTT students to a level equal to or better than other students in Ontario.

Strategies:

1. **Develop and implement basic skills (reading, math) enhancement program** that all students (early years to grade eight) must participate in, involving monthly testing of performance levels and remedial interventions as required.
2. **Develop a basic-skills intervention program** that offers individualized tutoring geared specifically to each child's diagnostic outcomes.
3. Ensure that funding and a long-term plan is in place to hire and retain the highly qualified staff we need in order to ensure positive educational outcomes of our students.
4. Implement a screening process that will initiate the flow of additional support/services for students such as hearing assessment, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, eye care, dental care, mental health care, etc.
5. Develop and implement a strategy that encourages parents and guardians to value the importance of child development in relation to academic success.

Chapter Four: Life-long Learning, continued

Goal #4: To make the school a haven of safety for children and a healing place where children and youth learn to support each other and to address their healing issues with the support of school staff and other relevant agencies.

Strategies:

1. The Education staff will work collaboratively with staff from Health and Wellness and Social Development, to develop a school-based healing and wellness initiative that addresses
 - staff wellness
 - parent wellness
 - staff knowledge and capacity
 - school atmosphere
 - comprehensive learning for healing and wellness for students of all ages
 - peer learning and support

Goal #5: To broaden the curriculum in 0-8 schooling to include life-skills, and Ojibwe culture, language and history.

Strategies:

1. Drawing on the existing cultural curriculum already developed for the Early Years Program, utilize community and regionally based resources to assist a curriculum development team to integrate life-skills, Ojibwe language, culture and history into a workable curriculum program beginning. Three levels of curriculum will be developed.

Level One: Early Childhood, Grades 1-3

Level Two: Grades 4-6

Level Three: Grades 7-8 and adult

[Note: Given current funding realities teachers are working within our educational reform process will need to take on curriculum development assignments with technical support from a curriculum specialist.]

Goal #6: To raise the level of funding COTT education programs receive to a level that is at least on par with provincially funded schools in Ontario and that supports the wholistic development of students. Develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy for COTT educational development involving the following

Strategies:

1. Develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy for COTT educational development.
2. Seek special funds for educational evaluation, new program and curriculum development, human resources development and remedial basic skills intervention from foundations and special government initiatives.
3. Seek supplemental dollars to raise the level of core school funding from foundations and from a private donors campaign.
4. Undertake a political and public media campaign in conjunction with the Union of Ontario Indians, the Chiefs of Ontario and Assembly of First Nations to force DIAND to raise the level of funding for core school operations.
5. Dedicate a significant proportion (25%) of profits from Band aimed enterprises to education funding equalization until such time federal funding levels address the existing funding gaps. Ensure that this stop-gap funding in no way jeopardizes current or future government funding.

Chapter Four: Life-long Learning, continued

Goal #7: Develop a Chippewas of the Thames post-secondary institution that offers a wide-range of adult education and training needed for a successful, healthy and prosperous life for COTT people. Specifically COTT college will offer

- Adult upgrading
- Employment readiness
- Vocational trades training
- College and university preparation programs
- University programs
- Community development training
- Professional training and upgrading (such as Native teacher education, Native social work certification, etc.)

Strategies:

Short Term

1. Chief and Council pass legislation authorizing the formation of the college and approving its charter.
2. A senior adult educator/post-secondary training specialist is engaged to serve as a coordinator of the COTT college initiatives and charged with the responsibility to broker and develop courses and programs to be offered with the community under the banner of COTT College.
3. The Antler River School becomes COTT College at night.
4. Conduct a community-wide post-secondary education learning needs assessment to identify priority courses and programs.

Long Term

5. COTT receives the funding needed to build a Chippewas College facility.

CHAPTER FIVE: PROSPERITY DEVELOPMENT

Definition

The ultimate source of all wealth and prosperity is the earth. In the traditional past, people understood this because they lived directly off the land. The economic issues of today are very different, but the basic challenge is the same: how can COTT people earn a living by what they can harvest from the earth, produce or manufacture, sell or barter or by providing services to others? The COTT First Nation can be considered to be prosperous when its individuals and families can adequately meet their basic needs through viable economic activity, whether that be through employment or through entrepreneurship. As well, true prosperity will mean that the collective resources of the Nation (e.g., lands, capital and infrastructure) are utilized in ways that are consistent with sustainable stewardship and ethical practices while at the same time ensuring the prosperity and wellbeing of the present and future generations.

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

1. As this plan is being developed, the economic viability of the whole region of Canada in which COTT is located has collapsed. This has had a negative impact on COTT as well because jobs are scarce and there is little investment in new economic ventures.
2. Roughly 70% of COTT households receive all or a significant part of their income from Ontario Works (i.e., welfare). There are currently 47 people with high school diplomas on welfare. Only about 30% of those who are able to work have jobs or are engaged in business.
3. This means that 65 to 70% of COTT people are living below the poverty line (as defined by Canada's low-income cut-off (which many people agree is itself too low to meet a family's basic needs for shelter, food, transportation, health, etc.). Recent sharp increases in the cost of food and fuel, as well as government cuts to health benefits have made this problem even worse.
4. Poverty also brings with it a stigma that impacts people psychologically, especially children and youth and especially when they attend schools or other events off the Reserve.
5. 95% of all people who are working on the Reserve have jobs with the Band. There are only a few small businesses such as smoke shops and convenient stores. A small handful of people work off the Reserve. This may, in part, be because people think small and don't believe that there's a whole world out there for them.
6. Many members of the COTT First Nation are trapped in dependency thinking and learned helplessness. One of the challenges in this regard is that people have an "entitlement mentality" (i.e., it is my right not to work and to collect welfare). Another challenge is that people do not believe that the "poverty trap" can be broken. "My parents were on welfare; why not me?"
7. Dependency and entitlement thinking get transferred into the workplace. Many people do not have much work experience and they have not internalized the idea that they should take pride in their work and do their best. They just want the cheque.
8. Some workplaces (both on and off Reserve) are not healthy. In some workplaces there is racism and/or bullying. We should expect our own COTT workplaces to be healthy, and we should expect outside employers to treat us with respect.

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, continued

9. Some 75% of the community's children and youth are living in poverty (i.e., do not always have adequate shelter, food, clothing or medical services and/or cannot participate in recreational and educational opportunities because they do not have transportation or cannot pay user fees for these programs). Peer pressure between children from the "have" and the "have not" families is making the lives of these children even more difficult.
10. Unhealthy parenting practices, such as giving children and youth the material possessions they crave without asking them to contribute to the family by doing chores, is creating a generation that does not understand the value of money or work. In the past, children grew up learning that it's normal to work for what you get. Values included working hard, being self-reliant, doing your best and contributing to your family and community.
11. Many children and youth are not gaining the academic and job-related skills that they need to be successful in the job market or as entrepreneurs. Many students are already 2 to 3 grades levels behind when they leave Antler School for high school.
12. Too many youth move into adulthood believing that poverty is an inevitable part of their future. Any hopes for a career and productive, prosperous life are considered to be a "pipe dream". Thus the intergenerational cycle of poverty and dependency on income support payments is perpetuated.
13. Some young women view having children as a means to being eligible for the welfare cheque.
14. It is estimated that about 25% of youth grow up in strong and healthy families. Most of these put aside the attraction of substance abuse and other dysfunctional behaviour and focus on getting their education, developing their careers and building their own strong families.
15. There is a real lack of employment opportunities for COTT members, and especially youth. Boys have more opportunities than girls because they can get jobs in landscaping, road crews or construction. Employers tend to think that girls can't do these things.
16. Where employment opportunities do exist, other barriers may make it difficult to access them (such as a lack of transportation and low levels of personal wellness).
17. Besides real opportunities, youth need more training, coaching and role models to be successful.
18. Women face many economic challenges given the high incidence of single parent families that they head. The lack of affordable housing and low incomes make it very difficult for these women to ensure that their children have their basic needs met.
19. Many COTT men are demoralized because they do not see any economic opportunities for themselves, even if they have post-secondary education. They are distressed that they cannot fulfill their roles as husbands and fathers to provide financially for their families and to own land and/or a home.
20. Some elders do not have adequate financial resources to meet their basic needs.
21. Many families lack financial literacy related knowledge and skills such as budgeting, saving and spending discipline, and a practical understanding of how to manage money.
22. In the face of shrinking rights and benefits, the COTT First Nation needs to move past "managing" poverty and trying to hold on to what it now has to managing wealth and developing its potential. It needs to expand its thinking and strategies.

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, continued

23. Special thought needs to be given to how benefits and programs designed to help people improve their livelihood can be extended to off-reserve members, who face many of the same issues and challenges as on-reserve people do.
24. A dependency or entitlement mentality are also impacting our capacity to develop our economy as a Nation. Our thinking stops at the boundaries of the Reserve, but why shouldn't we have a big economic impact even in the centre of London. To grow a big enough economic base we are going to have to make strategic partnerships that will help us lever access to needed capital, skills, technical capacity and markets.
25. Many potential investors view the risk factors of doing business with and/or on the Reserve (such as inadequate infrastructure, poorly educated or unmotivated work force, lack of enabling policies and by-laws, lack of access on the part of First Nations partners to capital, and small local markets) as too high.
26. The Bear Creek Settlement could provide a relatively small, but nonetheless important source of investment capital for building an economic engine provided we invest it wisely. Some community members want the money to be spent down in the form of dividends given out to each community member. Others see Bear Creek as an opportunity to create a sustainable business strategy that will bring long-term sustainable prosperity to COTT people for generations to come. These two points of view will need to be reconciled.
27. Our COTT land claims covers more territory than any other claim in Canada in terms of the area from which we will be entitled to select and purchase land. This could put us into conflict with the perceived self-interests of some other First Nations.
28. The "double mother clause" (section 12(1)(a)(iv) of the Indian Act) and issues related to Bill-C31 surrounding who has Treaty status, and who has the right to federal benefits as a registered Indian will effect some of our members. The controversial "second generation cut-off rule results in a loss of Indian status after two successive generations of poverty by non-Indians". "People registered under section 6(2) of the Indian Act have fewer rights than those registered under 6(1) because they cannot pass on status to their child unless the child's other parent is also a registered Indian". (Furi and Wherrett, 1996, 2003)

This means that some legitimate COTT members in terms of cultural and community affiliation will be denied benefits. In other words, the Federal Government is legislating the Indian status of some of our community members out of existence. We will need to take care of these members of our COTT family.

[Note: Source: "Indian Status and Band Membership" (BP410-E). Megan Furi and Jill Wherrett. Furi 1996, revised Furi 2003. Political and Social Affairs Division. Parliamentary Information and Research Service, Ottawa, Library of Parliament.

29. Politically, we have been unable to make the tough decisions required to solve tough problems such as chronic welfare, dependency and ending a housing program we can't afford.

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

Goal #1: To create pathways through which COTT individuals and families can make the journey from chronic poverty, dependency and unemployment to self-reliance, productivity and sustainable prosperity. Specifically, a) to significantly reduce chronic poverty and raise family income until no one is living below the poverty line, b) to greatly reduce dependency on welfare, c) to engage many individuals on a journey of self-improvement leading to increased independence, self-confidence and self-reliance, and ultimately to improved economic status, and d) to articulate COTT traditional values and principles to guide the journey from dependency to self-reliance.

Strategies:

1. **Social Welfare Reform Life-Path Development Program.** To develop and implement a Social Welfare Reform Life-Path Development Program that systematically engages those receiving social assistance (i.e., Ontario Works) in a journey of personal growth, healing, self-development, employment preparation, and to support and assist these individuals to become engaged in steady employment or business activities.

The goals of the program will be:

- a. Increasing individual, family and community wellbeing, with the understanding that health and wellness are prerequisites to economic success.
- b. Reducing the negative impacts of ongoing addictions and abuse, as well as the intergenerational impacts of trauma, as all of these affect the ability of individuals to participate as contributing and responsible members of their families and communities.
- c. Decreasing dependency on social assistance and other transfer programs.
- d. Increasing the ability of chronically unemployed (and underemployed) persons to improve their own capacities and to systematically learn and work their way into improved social and economic circumstances.
- e. Creating economic opportunities and jobs, and moving the community gradually but steadily toward full employment and prosperity for all.
- f. Paying special attention to the social and economic advancement of youth.

An Integrated Web of Front-line Programs

What is needed is an interconnected web of programs, services and incentives that all work together for one common purpose, and that is *to support and assist individuals to move from dysfunction and dependency toward wellness, productivity and self-reliance, or what some have called “an honourable existence”.*

One way of measuring progress can be referred to as the “ladder of capacity development”, which describes four levels or stages that an individual on the journey might move through:

- Stage One – Unemployable and dysfunctional
- State Two – Marginally employable and wounded
- Stage Three – Employed and working on themselves
- Stage Four – Leaders

A diagram of this ladder can be found on the following page.

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

Essentially, *what is needed is a coordinated sequence of experiences and supportive program opportunities that systematically help individuals to move up through the levels of the “ladder of capacity”*. The following characteristics would need to be built into such a program effort.

- a. This **integrated program effort** needs to be planned, implemented and maintained under one umbrella administration.
- b. There needs to be an **integrated case management approach** across all departments and programs.
- c. A **single entry point** and one integrated intake process is also necessary.
- d. There also needs to be a **monitoring and measuring** system that enables us to track the progress individuals are making as a result of the support and encouragement of our programs, and also allows us to change and further develop our programs as needed.

The Ladder of Capacity Development

<i>Category</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Steps Needed</i>
Stage 1 - Unemployable and dysfunctional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ does not seek employment ◆ chronic pattern of substance abuse and ill health ◆ does not benefit from normal employment programming support ◆ has special needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ healing ◆ sheltered workshops ◆ life skills ◆ sheltered work experience ◆ remedial learning
Stage 2 - Marginally employable and wounded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ unreliable work patterns ◆ frequently absent from work ◆ frequently in conflict ◆ low level of productivity ◆ personal crises as a lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ healing and personal growth workshops ◆ life and other relevant skills ◆ training ◆ work experience ◆ more responsibility and rewards that go with it
Stage 3 - Employed and working on themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ can hold a job in right kind of environment ◆ advancing in personal and job skills ◆ on a healing and learning path ◆ has taken responsibility for own development ◆ is sometimes supportive of others working up the ladder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ life skills ◆ job skills ◆ wellness ◆ technical support and coaching ◆ specialized training ◆ career planning
Stage 4 - Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ creatively using gifts ◆ emotionally competent ◆ have good human relationships ◆ able to manage money ◆ healthy families ◆ could hold a job on or off reserve ◆ capable of running own business with support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ opportunities for continuous improvement in knowledge and skills ◆ access to funding ◆ job and business opportunities ◆ on-going personal wellness work ◆ a pattern of reaching out and helping others up the ladder

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

Key Program Elements

1. From the Participant's Perspective

From the standpoint of the program as experienced by participants, the following elements need to be addressed or built into the front-line program.

- a. Life-Path planning
- b. Healing and personal growth opportunities, learning about culture, history and identity
- c. Membership in a “core group” that bonds/grows together and mutually supports one another on the journey
- d. Life skills training
- e. Basic education opportunities (literacy and numeracy)
- f. An incentive system, involving income subsidization and top-offs as a reward for progress
- g. Job skills training
- h. Work experience and apprenticeship
- i. Exposure to entrepreneurship and small business training and experience
- j. Exposure to real employment and business opportunities
- k. Long-term support (3-5 years) through ongoing core group cohorts that continue to meet and receive program support, as well as extended financial incentives
- l. Personal counseling and employment services
- m. Involvement and support for participants’ families in the growth process

2. Inter-department Collaborative Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

At the inter-departmental and community level, the following additional elements need to be in place.

- a. Coordination of all related programs under an **inter-departmental management team and single coordinator**, preferably located under the same roof.
- b. Work plans and business plans from all departments that outline how they will play their assigned role an integrated program delivery approach.
- c. An integrated (across all departments) intake, screening, referral and case management system that brings together all services for any one person into a single working framework (i.e., social assistance, child protection, health, education and training, housing and employment services). This will create a “one-stop shopping” for community members and will enable departments to coordinate their efforts in assisting individuals. It also prevents individuals from “falling through the cracks” or from playing one program off against another.
- d. The creation of economic and employment opportunities, so that as individuals work their way “up the ladder”, there are real opportunities for them to take advantage of.

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

- e. A comprehensive public education, communication and engagement strategy focused on: 1) **influencing the public mind** to shift from dependency and entitlement thinking to a shared consensus valuing self-reliance, community service and mutual care for those who need it, 2) providing a clear understanding of what the journey is from poverty and dependency to self-reliance and prosperity; i.e., a vision of what it takes to succeed with communication oriented to school children and youth as well as to the community, 3) **educating** community members about the practical steps they can take for self and family improvement, and 4) **engaging** community members in co-learning and action strategies leading to improved levels of personal, family and community wellbeing.
- f. Begin public education at the school level with a strong emphasis on the importance of staying in school. Help young people to develop a positive vision for themselves, so they can “see” possibilities for themselves and their own future. As part of this initiative, develop a junior business program through which young people can get hands-on experience building a business and making money.
- g. Developing community consensus in traditional values and principles to guide the journey to prosperity.

Strategies continued:

- 2. **Create a political and policy environment that encourages and supports efforts made toward self-improvement and avoids in any way enabling continued dependency and entitlement thinking and behaviour.** This “tough love” approach will require that leadership continuously articulate the following message.
 - a. Prosperity and much-improved economic outcomes for our people is possible and achievable, and we are committed to supporting anyone prepared to work hard to get there.
 - b. Our economic prosperity and the wellbeing of our children and future generations is severely handicapped by our chronic patterns of addictions, dependency and poverty. We must overcome these patterns as individuals, families and as a community of we are going to prosper.
 - c. There are many exiting and promising opportunities before us, and other First Nations across the country are already well advanced in their journey toward prosperity. We can learn from them and we can make big improvements, but we’re going to have to work hard, smart and with all of our Indigenous creativity. We’re also going to have to work together. While individuals can succeed our greatest strength is our people working together. That’s a competitive advantage.
 - d. The Harper government is clearly on a path of reducing federal funding to First Nations. A 20% reduction in the next few years is a realistic expectation. We can’t wait passively as our population grows and the money available to support them shrinks. We need to act now to build up our own-source-income. This will mean an end to our old patterns of large-scale dependency. The money just isn’t going to be there. The gravy train is being decommissioned. This will require (over the next five-ten years) a complete overhaul of our social assistance programs so that those who need support can get it, but those who are physically and mentally capable of working will have to work.

*It is understood that this shift will need to come gradually and that unless there is actually work to be had, the shift can’t take place. To make such a shift will require very wise policy changes that **encourage** and **enable** people to get off welfare, but that don’t take related benefits away too fast (such as rent and utilities support) and then draw people back into dependency because such cost burdens cannot be covered from the income earned in a low wage (entry level) job.*

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

Strategies continued:

3. **Sharing success stories.** Research and tell the success stories that demonstrate the pathway from poverty to self-reliance and prosperity of our own community members, and develop a role model mentorship program in which someone wanting to make the journey can be connected with someone who has already done it.

Goal #2: Create an enabling environment for self-reliance, both for COTT community members and families, as well as for the First Nation.

Strategies:

This goal requires the simultaneous implementation of many strategies that, in combination, will enable community members and the community as a whole to gradually and steadily make the shift toward self-reliance and prosperity.

1. **Strategic Land Use.** The upcoming Bear Creek settlement will allow COTT to purchase “pods” of land across what was once out traditional territory, which is the largest land selection area ever awarded to a First Nation in Canada. We will select land based on the economic and strategic opportunities each selection can offer us. For example, we will certainly select a number of parcels along the 401-402 corridors especially for the purpose of developing businesses and individual projects. Similarly, we will strive to obtain parcels in central London and in other municipalities, as well as agricultural land suitable for agro-business ventures. In all of these selections, our goal will be to maximize own-source-income, which will in turn reduce our dependency on government funds.
2. **Strategic Partnership and Joint Ventures.** In order to enter into profitable businesses we will seek partnerships with experienced companies and individuals who are already successful in our targeted line of business, so that they can mentor us into the capabilities we will need for success. These “deals” will be very cautiously made to ensure that COTT retains control of our own ventures, that our people are trained and given the opportunities to step into the business process, and so that there is an exit strategy for the partner in ventures which we seek to become sole operators. Some of these ventures will require the negotiation of a favorable Impact Benefits Agreement (IBA), particularly in dealing with resource extraction industries such as oil and gas.
3. **Strategic Infrastructure Development.** In order to develop profitable ventures on our own lands, we will need to develop the infrastructure (such as roads, water, sewer, power, building) that make what we have to offer attractive and perceptive partners.
4. **Strategic Land Tenures.** There are now only two legal categories of land we can acquire: a) Reserve lands which technically fall under the jurisdiction of the Indian Act, and b) fee simple lands, i.e., the outright ownership of lands and the holding of legal title, which is how most Canadians obtain and hold land. The disadvantage of fee simple is that it is subject to the jurisdiction of local and provincial governments to whom taxes must be paid.

We will work to establish a third category for our selected lands (i.e., that has neither reserve nor fee simple status) called “Indian Territory”, a designation we will seek from Ontario that will enable us to collect tax revenues accrued from that land for use in funding our economic development.

5. **Levering Trust Funds.** We propose to lever funds from our future settlement agreements (such as Bear Creek) to finance investments in lands and business development initiatives with guaranteed returns to the community.

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

Strategies continued:

6. **Removing Disincentives and Installing Incentives for Individuals.** We will systematically search out and remove disincentives to self-reliance within our system and replace them with incentives. For example, many people have criminal records that constitute a barrier to employment, even though offences are from a long time ago. We will work together with relevant external authorities to create a process and mechanisms through which an individual can earn their way into having their records cleared. Similarly, if a person earns a little extra cash, their next Ontario Works cheque will be “clawed back” that amount. With that disincentive why would a person even try to develop an income stream? A new, more flexible policy is needed which encourages initiative while not allowing double dipping.
7. **Ending Political Interference Related to the Disbursement of Social and Economic Benefits.** In the past individuals who were denied benefits could often circumvent program offices and have their decisions (made correctly according to established policy) overturned. This meant that individuals were routinely given money or other benefits that they weren't entitled to, which has the double effect of undermining public policy and guidelines that were established for very good reasons, as well as reinforcing entitlement and dependency thinking.

This practice was part of the political culture of COTT for many years. Politician's were/are expected to provide benefits upon request in exchange for votes. Some politicians say that even today if they don't give benefits when people ask for them, they will lose their vote.

In order to move the community beyond a chronic dependency and entitlement mentality, Chief and Council will commit themselves to abolishing this protocol.
8. **Develop a comprehensive taxation strategy (tabacco, etc.)** that will enable COTT to collect revenues from royalties, user fees, licenses, taxes on business operations, and eventually income tax for members earning at sufficient levels which includes a strategy to recoup the taxes COTT members living off-reserve are now paying to the Federal and Provincial Governments.
9. Through strategic partnerships, **establish a financial institution** capable of capitalizing economic development ventures, as well as serving as a vehicle for capturing and managing outside investments in our businesses.

Goal #3: Gradually increase our Own-Source Income (OSI) until it equals or exceeds the cost of all fully funded Band operations. This does not imply that Canada will be relieved of its funding responsibilities to our people, but only that we will be able to manage the full scope of our programs and operations without fear of loss of our only funding source or of control of our own destiny.

Strategies:

1. This will be accomplished by utilizing a combination of strategies outlined under goal number two above (innovative land use, partnership and joint ventures, strategic infrastructure development, new forms of land tenure, leveraging trust funds, comprehensive tax strategy, establishing a financial land institution, etc.), as well as through the direct development of a wide-range of businesses, social enterprises, investments and profitable joint ventures.

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

Goal #4: To steadily increase both the number and success of small and medium sized business initiatives owned and operated by COTT Band members.

Strategies

1. Mount an intensive small- and medium-sized business development campaign and support program that will result in many and varied profitable initiatives (e.g. restaurants, laundromat, flea market, “stone-world-like tourist attraction, used car dealership, First Nations mortuary, car detailing, crafts [such as beading and quilting and making regalia and pageant dresses, rental/lease high-end gated community) both on- and off-Reserve (especially in the greater London area) that provide employment and business income

Goal #5: Invest in and grow a number of carefully selected Band owned enterprises and as they become profitable, reinvest in others.

Strategies:

1. Utilizing the best professional advice available, leveraging COTT lands (especially selected lands from the Bear Creek settlement), as well as through strategic partnerships with already successful ventures and levered capital anchored by our trust funds, we will selectively invest in and grow promising business ventures.
2. A **COTTFN Development Corporation** (legally at arms length from Chief and Council) will be set up to help us to establish selection criteria, to manage due diligence and preliminary feasibility studies, and to co-manage any corporate entities established through partnerships.
3. To create, as an offshoot of the Councils activities, an **investment and financial management institution** owned and controlled by COTT, but governed to the highest standards of Canadian banking law.

Goal #6: To establish a college/trade school that can offer high quality, fully accredited post-secondary education and training in strategic areas related to COTT economic and social development.

Strategies

1. To conduct a labour force training needs analysis specific to the COTT population and harmonized with ongoing economic and labour market trends to determine the highest priority training needs in the region and beyond.
2. To link training to community learning needs for social and economic development.
3. To begin immediately brokering existing training courses and programs from already accredited institutions that meet learning needs.
4. To pass legislation establishing “Chippewas College”, and to hire a senior adult educator to serve as the first “principal”, charged with the task of program and resource development.
5. To build a college building within the first five years of operation.
6. To seek independent accreditation status in Ontario after five years of operation.

Chapter Five: Prosperity Development, continued

Goal #7: To conduct feasibility studies in the following potential COTT business ventures: a) a regional arts, culture and convention centre to host First Nations, government, business and culturally oriented activities, b) a truck stop gas bar and restaurant on 401-402 highways, c) a casino, d) an Aboriginal tobacco growing, manufacturing and sales company (this will require delicate negotiations with federal and provincial authorities regarding taxation issues), e) one or more green energy production plants using bio-digestion technology, geothermal, solar or other technologies, and f) organic green houses and market gardening operations possibly linked to the waste heat of a biogas generation plant and also connected to value added downstream food production and marketing.

Strategies

1. Feasibility studies will be carried out under the direction of the COTT Investment and Business development Council by the COTT Economic Development department.

Goal #8: Develop a comprehensive 20-year economic development plan with clear 5, 10 and 15 year horizons and goals.

Strategies

1. Based on extensive community consultation and consensus building, the “COTT Investment and Business development Council” (see goal 5, strategy 2 above) working closely with the Economic Development department and Chief and Council, will operationalize the relevant goals and strategies of the Comprehensive Community Plan Framework document (i.e., this document) into a staged and implementable plan with goals, outcomes, outputs/strategies, and evaluation measures for year by year implementation and with clear achievement benchmarks for 5, 10, 15 and 20-year horizons.

Partners and Collaborators

Chief and Council, the Economic Development Office, Ontario Works, Education, Health and Wellness, Social Development

CHAPTER SIX: INFRASTRUCTURE

Definition

Infrastructure refers to the built environment of the COTT First Nation. It includes basic utilities such as water, electricity, and waste management. It also includes housing, roads and related equipment such as street lighting, snow cleaning and public transportation vehicles, etc. It also includes the buildings the community uses to support its programs and services such as the school, band office, and recreational centre. It includes as well churches and other buildings owned by community groups, recreation and other facilities that may have been developed to support social and economic activities (such as a cultural centre or a business incubator or any land that has been serviced with access to utilities).

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

1. At least 25% of COTT homes are infested with mould, and there is no plan or resources to address this serious health hazard. Many homes are in poor repair because they have not been maintained. In some cases, residents have contributed to this problem by abusing their homes.
2. COTT is under a permanent boil water advisory. There is not sufficient water and the existing water supply is not safe to drink or maybe even to bathe in. The water treatment plant is outdated and dysfunctional.
3. Lack of transportation means that many children and youth do not have access to social, recreational and education opportunities. It contributes to the isolation of seniors and the other most vulnerable segments of the population. Many people who could be employed cannot get to work. COTT needs a busing service for getting people around the community and to town.
4. Roads are narrow, inadequately maintained, poorly lit and traffic laws are not enforced, making them very dangerous to pedestrians and vehicle traffic.
5. A lack of developed commercial space (or serviced land) makes it hard for businesses to get started on the Reserve

Goal #1: To ensure that all community infrastructure is of the highest quality, beautifully designed, sustainable and environmentally friendly (e.g., grey water management, solar, geothermal or other green sources of energy, etc.).

Strategies:

1. **Develop a long-term, multi-phased community infrastructure plan** that establishes clear standards, that prioritize needs and wants in terms of what is required to bring facilities and services up to acceptable standards, and that lays out a pathway through which all infrastructure needs are met for today and are sustainable for at least 25 years into the future.
 - a. The infrastructure plan will contain or be linked to a long-term capital plan that supports the implementation of the infrastructure plan.
 - b. The human resource development needs associated with acquiring, monitoring and managing the community's infrastructure will be addressed in the plan.
 - c. Utilize public-private partnerships to meet at least some of the most immediate infrastructure needs and to avoid long (and sometime futile) waits for government financing.
 - d. Include in the plan the engagement of community volunteerism in support of meeting some of the most immediate and pressing infrastructure needs (e.g., repairing moldy housing)

Chapter Six: Infrastructure, continued

Goal #2: Build a state of the art water treatment facility that provides a safe and secure supply of drinking water for everyone and is supported by policies, staff and budget to maintain consistently high standards.

Strategies:

1. Continue to negotiate with INAC to receive replacement funding for the current inadequate water system, while at the same time seeking alternative models of funding, and innovative, environmentally friendly technologies and strategic options (such as a public-private partnership).

Goal #3: Ensure that all COTT families have healthy, well-built and affordable housing, and that as many families as possible are able to move toward home ownership.

Strategies:

1. **Establish a COTT housing board** and give them the authority to develop and implement a comprehensive housing plan that contains a range of alternative models for community housing to the INAC/CMHC housing model.
2. All Band employees and anyone else who has sufficient income will be required to pay rent (proportional to income), and should be given the option to get into home ownership, either by taking over their present home, or by being assisted to build a new one.
 - a. A plan to renovate and repair all housing stock will be developed and implemented with priority given to removing the threat of mould from houses infected with it.
 - b. Residents will be given responsibility to maintain their own homes to the degree they own equity in it.

Goal #4: Develop Housing Readiness. We realize that it is not enough to plan to build or upgrade houses. We also need to develop our people so that they are ready and able to embrace home ownership, and are ready, willing and able to assume the responsibilities that come with ownership or at very least responsible occupancy.

Strategies:

1. Utilize the healthy families program to engage families on a journey of personal growth, healing, learning and employment development that culminates in home ownership or, at least secure stable housing. (See Chapter Two: Goal 3, pages 21-22.)

Background Thinking: Our Theory of Change

We realize that home ownership is out of the question for at least 75% of our people who are still on welfare and still trapped in unhealthy patterns of life until they have been engaged in the journey of personal growth and self-development. 14 determinants of Aboriginal health were identified on page 17, at the end of Chapter One on Health and Wellness. Similarly, in “The Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts” by Juha Mikkonen and Dennis Raphael (2010, York University School of Health Policy and Management, ISBN 978-0-9683484-1-3) a list of 14 social determinants of health are considered: 1) income and income distribution, 2) education, 3) unemployment and job security, 4) employment and working conditions, 5) early childhood development, 6) food insecurity, 7) housing, 8) social exclusion, 9) social safety net, 10) health services, 11) Aboriginal status, 12) gender, 13) race, and 14) disability.

Chapter Six: Infrastructure, continued

No matter which list we consider, we can see that these factors that lead to and determine “health” also lead to and determine the capability of a person or a family to qualify for home ownership, or even to be able to hold onto and take care of secure and stable housing. Indeed, the social determinants of health (or of sustainable housing) are not a list of independent variables. Factors such as adequate income, health and wellness, social exclusion, education levels, social safety net, and fair and equitable administration of public policy can make or break a family’s capability to achieve home ownership or secure and stable housing.

We therefore recognize the absolute necessity of: a) creating a seamless web of programming around our families that will enable them to make the necessary growth steps that are required toward secure and eventually private home ownership, b) the critical importance of community economic development in creating viable income streams and jobs for people, and therefore, c) the fundamental necessity of developing the capacity of our leadership and staff from all departments to design, develop and implement the supports and program opportunities that are required to help our people make the journey toward sustainable housing and home ownership, and d) the necessity of ensuring that our administrative system, programs and public policy work together to create incentives, support and encouragement to our people to enhance the growth journey towards sustainable well-being, prosperity, and secure and stable housing.

Goal #5: Give priority to upgrading and/or developing basic community infrastructure required for health, safety and wellbeing, namely

- the water system
- safe affordable housing
- upgrade and patrol the community’s roads so that they are safe and well-lit
- develop a public transportation system that will provide access for everyone to community facilities and events as well as to employment opportunities

Strategies:

1. **Hire an infrastructure manager** and charge that person with the responsibility to: a) develop the comprehensive infrastructure plan in consultation with the community and relevant agencies, b) seek funding and partnership arrangements to finance needed infrastructure projects, c) oversee and encourage the ongoing maintenance of all existing infrastructure, d) oversee all infrastructure development projects, and e) initiate a non-profit transportation company that operates on a cost recovery basis.

Goal #6: To address the following specific infrastructure needs

- To build a recreation multi-plex that includes a hockey arena, ball fields, gyms, swimming pool and meeting rooms both for the use of COTT residents and nearby communities
- To build a high school in collaboration with neighbouring First Nations
- To build an adult education university/trade school/college
- To build commercial and industrial/manufacturing sites on-reserve, along the 401-402 highway corridors and elsewhere in the surrounding area including in the city of London

Strategies:

1. Each of these projects will be previewed by a special project committee appointed by Chief and Council to plan (with the community) and to seek the necessary funding for each project.

CHAPTER SEVEN: LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Definition

Ethical stewardship of the land and natural environment is based on the understanding that humans are part of the natural world and not separate from it. Ultimately, the land provides us with all that we need and its bounty must be shared among all of us. This means that we have the responsibility to manage our land and natural resources conscientiously to ensure that the way of life of the current generation does not harm the capacity of the land to meet the needs of future generations, as we seek new and creative ways of thinking about land as a lever and contributor to prosperity development.

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

1. In long ago days, COTT people hunted, fished, trapped and made everything we used from tools, canoes, snowshoes, bows and arrows to clothing and shelter. We gathered fresh greens, berries, nuts and medicine plants in their proper season. We had to know the land and everything that grew and lived there in every season. We knew every stream and lake, where each kind of animal made its home and how to hunt, trap and gather what we needed. Our people only took what they needed, and we never wasted anything.
2. There are conflicting values and interests within COTTFN regarding our basic orientation towards how to relate to lands and environment. Some see land as an economic resource and a means to achieve economic progress. Their highest priority is economic wellbeing. Environmental concerns, while seen as important, are not the highest priority and should not be allowed to interfere with “progress”. Others see the “sustainability” of the natural environment as the highest priority and they are unwilling to take any action, however profitable, that could lead to long-term environmental and human health risks.

Some of the gap between these two groups is generational and rooted in either a lack of scientific knowledge or an unwillingness to accept the evidence because it might mean having to curtail certain approaches to economic gain. While the values embedded in the “definition” (above) are paid lip-service to, a balancing of these two perspectives in decision-making will require hard work and honest dialogue.

3. COTT does not have enough land to meet all its current needs, never mind those of the future. There is not enough space for housing; for community infrastructure such as a recreation centre, a college/vocational centre and a commercial zone and industrial area; and for agricultural use to achieve food self-sufficiency.
4. COTT needs to think about its territory as stretching well beyond the boundaries of the Reserve. Many people do not know the community’s history in terms of the range of its territory, what was agreed to in treaties and what our rights are concerning land use. For example, proposed resource extraction or land use in our traditional territories needs to be presented to the Consultation and Accommodation Office so that a resource benefit agreement can be worked out.
5. COTT does not have a comprehensive land use plan (that includes an assessment of land use needs, an inventory of environmentally sensitive and culturally important sites or a description of the land use management disputes that need to be resolved) and supportive policies and/or legislation that stipulate processes for designating land ownership and for regulating land use (including zoning).
6. COTT now has trained human resources (a Lands and Environment Manager and a team) to coordinate the delivery of a comprehensive land use plan and to manage its implementation.

Chapter Seven: Land and Environmental Management, continued

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, continued

7. Current environmental protection regulations and enforcement are insufficient to ensure responsible stewardship of COTT land and natural resources. COTT land is experiencing degradation due to waste management issues, contamination from pesticides and other dangerous chemicals. COTT land is affected by the action of its neighbours (such as farming and waste disposal practices). Collaboration with these neighbours will be needed to ensure that environmental regulations are being followed by everyone.
8. There are no clear environmental, safety and protection regulations and policies that govern such instances as decommissioning a gas station or sealing old wells. In the absence of its own policies, COTT should at least adopt the regulations of other municipal jurisdictions in the area.
9. COTT currently has the opportunity to acquire additional land, and this process needs to be guided by a comprehensive land use plan as noted in point #5 above.

Goal #1: To develop a comprehensive plan for lands and environmental management. Specifically the plan needs to address the following areas of work.

- Articulating the values foundation that will guide our relationship with and our decision making about land and environment, and how we manage that interface
- Completing the Targeted Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and land use mapping project
- Stakeholder analysis, both within our own membership and beyond
- Identifying the legacy of past decision-making
- A community education and social marketing campaign focused on winning the support of community members concerning wise and effective land and environmental stewardship
- Detailed land use planning that addresses both current actual uses and future land use needs
- The conduct of an ecological inventory that will clarify the current state of our environment and what we need to do to protect it.
- The identification and engagement of stakeholders who need to be a part of decision making related to lands and environment decisions
- Governance and co-management policies, practices, structures and mechanisms
- Environmental protection standards and mechanisms of enforcement
- Legislation and policy development
- Purposeful land acquisition

Strategies:

1. To convene a series of community consultations focused on articulating the wisdom, values and principles we require to guide our decision making about and management of our lands and resources.
2. Complete a stakeholders analysis related to land use and environment to identify and engage all those persons and entities which need to have a voice in or be part of decision-making related to lands and environment, specifically: a) identify stakeholder groups and engage them in an in-depth consultation about their values, vision, needs, interests, plans and initiatives, and b) bring stakeholder groups together to contribute to the development of go-forward values and policies to guide planning for lands and environment.

Chapter Seven: Land and Environmental Management, continued

Strategies continued:

3. To ensure that the funding and results of the TEK and land use study now underway provides us with an adequate inventory of past and present land use, environmentally sensitive areas, as well as treaty implications and boundaries, all suitable for assessing the impact of proposed activities and serving as a foundation for continued land claims negotiations.
4. Conduct a public education campaign that raises the awareness levels of community members on key environmental issues (such as fracking, genetically modified crops, etc.) and opportunities (such as green energy generation).
5. To undertake a land use planning process that addresses: a) current land use realities and issues, b) proposed on-reserve land use, c) future land use needs for commercial, industrial and investment purposes, d) land use needs for food security, e) land use needs for future residential zoning in view of demographic trends showing significant population increases, and f) conflicts and competing interests in land use and selection.
6. Undertake an ecological and archeological inventory of our current land base, as well as any future land selection sites, to ensure adequate preservation measures are taken. Utilize community members and students as volunteers where possible.
7. Develop governance processes, policies, protocols, structure and mechanisms through which effective and timely decision-making regarding lands and environment matters can be made. This work needs to take place in the context of constitutional development work underway in the governance sector as described in Chapter Eight of this Comprehensive Community Plan.
8. Develop clear environmental protection standards, legislation and enforcement mechanisms, utilizing similar existing legislation and strategies borrowed from other jurisdictions as a guide, ensuring that what is developed specifies the lines and boundaries of authority and who is responsible for monitoring and enforcement.
9. Draft a set of by-laws and public policy statements for COTT environmental protectors, with clear guidelines regarding standards, penalties and enforcement procedures.
10. Develop a land acquisition plan that flows from the future land use requirements sections of the land use plan (see number three above). The land use acquisition plan will clearly define the exact specifications required to guide the selection of land.
11. Weave together and combine elements 1-9 above in the development of a lands and environment comprehensive plan with a 20-year horizon, as well as specific 1, 2, 5, 10 and 15-year goals and indications. Organize the plan into two large parts: a) Inward looking, and focused on meeting COTT's land use and environmental management needs, and b) Outward looking, and focused on the orientation of COTT's rights based negotiations, consultations, and land acquiring processes.

Chapter Seven: Land and Environmental Management, continued

Goal #2: Employ a rights-based approach in the development of a comprehensive plan for lands and environment.

Strategies:

1. Through public declaration and legal measures (when appropriate) assert that our ancestors (already buried) have rights, as do we, that flow from Aboriginal occupation of our traditional territory. To assert these rights, we will: a) identify graves and other important archeological sites, b) research and map past land use patterns (such as farming, hunting, fishing, ceremonial, special encampments, etc.), and c) utilize TEK and our land use history as a foundation for land claims negotiations.
2. Produce a series of research studies which establish continuous traditional land use of our traditional territory as well as studies and negotiation processes aimed at “reconciliation” (i.e., restoring previously lost relationships with our land base).

Goal #3: Bring together the 20 years of work of the COTT environment committee and the work of the newly created Lands and Environment Department into one coordinated effort that ensures that an adequate foundation is prepared for ongoing land claims negotiation.

Strategies:

1. To gather up, collate, review, analyze and summarize research complete to date.
2. To develop a strategic land claims research plan that logs and describes the outstanding information needed.
3. To infuse existing and future data into a GIS Mapping program that will provide suitable data presentation for purposes of decision-making and claims negotiation.

Goal #4: Undertake practical projects to demonstrate land-use sustainability options.

Strategies:

1. Work with community members and entities to realize community-based initiatives that demonstrate pathways to sustainability.
2. Specifically, undertake projects such as green energy production, organic agriculture, slow food production, water management, green building, green manufacturing, recycling, environmental and cultural tourism, etc. in collaboration with appropriate partners.

CHAPTER EIGHT: GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT

Definition

Governance refers to the leadership and management of community decision making (including processes of grassroots community engagement in the governance process) as well as the oversight of various funds and resources of the First Nation, the protocols, processes and rules by which that leadership and management takes place, and the prevailing policies, priorities, activities and the working culture created by those entrusted with governance positions.

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

1. COTT is experiencing a political “opening” since the spring election in 2011. Community engagement now in the process of developing important plans and making key decisions needs to be “normalized” in our governance processes, so that no matter who is elected in future elections, community participation becomes a necessary and required part of the governance process that cannot (according to strict rules) be by-passed.
2. Currently, COTT has not had a comprehensive **governance code** that describes the rules, limits of authority, and mandates of Chief and Council. In the absence of such a code and clear mechanisms of accountability and transparency reinforced by public oversight, there have been many abuses in the past. A new governance manual and leadership code have recently been completed and will soon be made available for public consultation. As well, a new Financial Administration law is being developed in collaboration with the First Nations Financial Management Bank.
3. The political culture is now in the process of changing, but the following problematic tendencies were part of that culture for many years.
 - a. Making decisions and deals that served private interests (often of those in power or their relatives)
 - b. Decision making behind closed doors, with lack of public accountability
 - c. Political interference in program operations, particularly in forcing managers to benefit certain individuals, even when doing so was a direct violation of established policies, procedures and standards
 - d. Politicians taking sides in human resource cases in which employee’s invoked political support to overturn manager’s decisions they didn’t like
 - e. Managers being judged or overruled and hung out to dry without due process in front of their staff, which severely weakened their ability to lead and manage their work teams and their programs
4. The current two-year election cycle is seen by many as “too short” a period of time for a new Chief and Council to address community goals and objectives.
5. The political culture in the community at large has been steeped in “special treatment, money and favours” for many years. It’s understood that your future success in the next election (always less than two years away) depends on your ability and willingness to give voters what they want. This is why past politicians were so ready to override rules and standards. This culture needs to be brought out into the light of day and carefully considered by the community—because it is the whole community that will need to be involved in order to change it.

Chapter Eight: Governance and Public Sector Management, continued

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities, continued

6. **COTT does not have a written constitution** of our own making that tells us how we, as a nation, want to govern ourselves. Our default position is Indian Act Government, which ignores our traditional decision-making processes, leaves many of our people virtually excluded from the political process and reinforces deep divisions among us.
7. Most community members (i.e., our electorate and the pool from which political candidates are drawn) are not well educated about our Treaty rights, our historical past, our heritage, how our current governance system really works, or about the larger political and economic trends that are defining the context of First Nation governance today (especially the trend toward shrinking and eroding away our rights and undercutting our ability to truly develop ourselves as a First Nation).
8. Off-reserve member's rights, responsibilities and benefits have not been clearly defined and protected. A process is needed for doing this that includes developing clear mechanisms for ensuring that, once standards and protocols are established, they are followed.
9. The current pattern of governance (which includes the Chief and Council system, housing and welfare benefits and other cash and program benefits) radically changed our historical governance and community way of life, and made us more dependent in our thinking. We have begun to see the system itself as our "treaty right" instead of focusing on our community development process and creating our own governance system.
10. COTTFN is part of the Anishnawbek Confederacy and as such, our community governance needs to be harmonized with and attuned to the regional governance values, and issues of common consensus.

Recently (spring 2012) the Wampum belt tradition and the three fire Treaty Council was reestablished. This heritage was readily embraced by both Christian and traditionalist leaders as common to all of our Anishnawbek communities, and will form a basis for cooperation on many issues in the months and years to come.

11. In order to be as inclusive as possible in the Bear Creek settlement consultation (spring 2012) extensive media tools were employed to increase the reach of the process. 176 members participated in a webcast virtual community meeting. Additionally, a toll-free number was advertised, along with a website feedback form. A dedicated Facebook page was also utilized to disseminate factual information relative to the consultation. All this demonstrates the current commitment of COTTFN to include all of its members in important decision-making processes.

Goal #1: Develop and articulate a statement of community values, principles and traditional wisdom teachings that can be used to guide governance development.

Strategies:

1. Hold a series of consensus building consultations through which community held values, principles and beliefs that can be used to guide political development processes (including the development of a new COTT constitution) are articulated. Be sure to include the voices of Anishinabek traditional path followers, Christians and any others who may wish to contribute.

Chapter Eight: Governance and Public Sector Management, continued

Goal #2: To shift the political culture of the community toward: a) honouring the Seven Grandfather Teachings in all political processes, b) community participation and engagement in the ongoing process of governance, c) consultation leading to consensus building on all key issues, d) transparency and accountability in day-to-day governance operations, e) rooting out corruption (i.e., special treatment, favours and money) as an integral part of how our political system *really* works, and f) a rights-based agenda.

Strategies:

1. Develop and conduct a public education and engagement campaign regarding: a) knowledge of our Ojibwe traditions, heritage, and wisdom teachings as they apply to our political process, b) knowledge of our history and particularly the history of our treaties and the impact of colonization and residential schools on how we are today, c) an introduction to how government actually works at the level of the Band surrounding municipalities, the Province and Canada, and d) knowledge about what our rights are, based on our own interpretation of treaties, the Canadian Constitution and Canadian law.
2. Establish acceptable standards of honesty, integrity, accountability and transparency in COTT governance through a community consultation and consensus building process.
3. Develop a Political Service Handbook (modeled after Human Resource Policy guidelines) that articulates the responsibilities, obligations and standards of behavior (i.e., code of conduct) expected of political office holders, and clearly states consequences for violations (which must be agreed upon by Chief and Council and passed into legislation) such as: a) more than three unexcused absences from meetings is grounds for removal from office, and b) no individual Council member can override public policy or established regulations or management decisions; such actions can only be taken by the whole Council.
4. Develop and administer an Oath of Office in which office holders pledge to honour and follow the code of conduct and standards of service articulated in the Political Service Handbook.

Goal #3: Develop a binding constitution for the COTT First Nation that will serve as a fundamental charter for governance.

Strategies:

1. Strike a constitutional development committee empowered to: a) engage the community, b) do research, c) draft policy documents for community consultation, d) lead and coordinate the process of drafting the constitution, and e) lead and coordinate the process of ratification by community referendum.
2. Finalize and employ the statement of values and principles developed under goal number one above.
3. Develop a constitutional framework document, which lays out all the purposes and elements that will be contained in the COTT constitution. Obtain community approval for the framework before proceeding with subsequent steps.

[Note: In preparing the framework document, it will be important for community members to be exposed to a variety of models of other constitutions, such as the constitutions of: a) Canada, b) Nishgaa First Nation, c) Carcross, Yukon First Nation, d) Papua New Guinea, and e) Cuba.]

Chapter Eight: Governance and Public Sector Management, continued

Strategies continued:

4. The **constitutional framework** will need to contain the following elements: a) founding beliefs, principles and purposes, b) definition and description of who is considered to be a part of, or under the authority of the constitution, who is part of “us” and who is not. Citizenship defined, (issues like the double-mother clause will need to be considered in this discussion), c) territory and jurisdiction defined, d) relationship with the greater Anishnawbek tribal entities versus community identity, e) relationship with neighbouring municipalities, Ontario, Canada, and other nations states such as Mexico or Mongolia, f) a **governance code**, which defines the responsibilities, authorities and limits to authority of those who govern, and how governance will be structured and carried out, including essential processes of decision-making and legislation, g) an **election or leadership selection code**, which describes how those chosen for public office are to be elected or selected, h) **government operations code**, which describes how the business of day-to-day government functions interface with the governance process, i) a **financial code**, which describes how funds are to be managed and accounted for, and j) **a charter of rights and responsibilities** of citizenship, which addresses such issues as child rights, service rights, workers rights, property rights, political rights, social and economic rights, etc., and the responsibilities of citizenship both generally and in relation to various bodies of rights.
5. Develop the essential model of governance (such as re-adopting a modernized version of the Ojibwe clan system, simply adapting the INAC Chief’s Council system or some other model) by reviewing a menu of options produced by other jurisdictions and hold an in-depth community consultation to reach a consensus on how the community wishes to “constitute” itself.

Goal #4: Establish a governance secretariat to oversee and coordinate the governance development process, as well as to support Chief and Council in fighting ongoing political battles.

Strategies:

1. Approve a governance coordinator with a strong legal background, wide experience building consensus through community consultation, and excellent research and documentation skills to serve as the hub of the governance and constitutional process. Provide the coordinator with a budget sufficient to engage research and technical support as required.

Chapter Eight: Governance and Public Sector Management, continued

Definition

Public Sector Management refers to the policies and procedures that have been put in place to guide the operation of the community's administration, programs and services, as well as the on-the-ground reality of how administration, programs and services actually function on a day-to-day basis to address the primary purposes which they are meant to serve as defined by ongoing work-plans and

Issues, Challenges, Opportunities

1. The need for a *Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP)*, departmental work plans and accountability frameworks that are aligned with the Comprehensive Community Plan.
2. The need for a well-functioning and capable *Senior Management Team*, that continuously reviews the progress of each department and clusters of departments charged with carrying out responsibilities and achieving outcomes related to the goals of the CCP. The Senior Management Team would report regularly to Chief and Council.
3. The need for a **comprehensive policies and procedures manual** that is updated regularly.
4. The need for a "*Quality Management*" like *measurement and accountability system* through which continuous measurement of staff and department performance tracks outputs and ensures that plans are actually being carried out.
5. Since the entire COTT system is being "re-tooled" to work together towards community development (i.e., the movement of the whole community toward sustainable wellbeing and prosperity) *staff development and training* is needed to re-orient thinking and activities for effectiveness in reaching community development goals and outcomes. Specifically, staff training related to personal growth and wellness, healing our relationships, community development and effective program development are needed.

Other staff development needs should be identified through a *comprehensive staff capacity assessment* that focuses on the specific goals and activities of each work unit.
6. Some departments and programs (for example, Education) have been underfunded or cut back to the point that services are being seriously impacted. New strategies will need to be developed for ensuring that essential services and programs are funded to a level that allows them to be functional.
7. Currently *Band programs tend to operate in their own silos*, without much collaboration across related program streams, which is leaving large gaps in needed services (particularly for children and families) as well as creating considerable overlap.
8. The *human resource policies and practices of COTT need to be harmonized* across all Band programs. There are now perceptions of unfair or unequal treatment related to a) wage and benefit packages, and b) the resolution of grievances and disputes between employees or between employees and managers.

Chapter Eight: Governance and Public Sector Management, continued

Integrated Goals and Strategies

1. Establish an overall Band-operations **annual master plan** that shows how the goals of the CCP will be operationalized in each given year, and that specifies the roles and responsibilities of each department in contributing to the plan's fulfillment.
2. **Strengthen the newly established Senior Management Team.** A primary task of the Senior Management Team will be to provide ongoing oversight and supervision of all departments and staff in carrying out the master plan.
3. Establish a **COTT Public Service Learning Plan**, based on an in-house capacity assessment.
4. **Foster collaborative initiatives across departments** to address goals and activities of the CCP that can't be carried out by a single department. Ensure that adequate budgets are available for cross-departmental initiatives by allocating portions of existing budgets from across the system. Ensure that these collaborative initiatives (such as a comprehensive youth strategy) are adequately supervised by the Senior Management Team.
5. Ensure that a universal COTT **Human Resource policy document** is up to date, that it is widely distributed, and that issues of fairness, equity and the resolution of grievances and conflicts are well addressed in practice and well understood by all staff.
6. **Implement a continuous improvement (Quality Management) system.**
7. Clearly define the **portfolio system** through which political leadership interact with programs.
8. Hold a series of **managers motivational trainings** and **develop a senior management support system** utilizing traditional circles and other tools as needed, so that the isolation and lack of understanding of the big picture some managers felt in the past is overcome, and everyone becomes aligned within the framework of the Comprehensive Community Plan.
9. **Establish a senior staff position to focus on coordination, coaching and support of the Comprehensive Community Plan implementation** across the COTTFN system, quarterly management (accountability and measuring), and community inclusion in the plan implementation process. This Coordinator will work closely with all departments and the Senior Management team in support of CCP implementation efforts.
10. **Strengthen the coordination between Senior Directors and Council portfolio holders** to ensure strong ongoing collaboration between elected leaders and front line implementers of the Comprehensive Community Plan.
11. **Establish a report card system to mark progress on the major goals of the plan.** Utilizing community generated indicators of progress and regular engagement with community members to measure progress, publish a quarterly report card on issues such as child and youth safety and wellbeing, the strength and health of families, health and wellness (especially addiction and lateral violence), progress in key education indicators, employment, economic status of families, community vandalism, etc.
12. **Long-term succession plans** will be developed by all senior managers with a focus on preparing junior staff for senior staff leadership.

It is not enough to outline vision, goals and strategies for the areas of development identified by the community as being of critical importance to community wellbeing and success. If left there, the Chippewas of the Thames Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) is unlikely to ever be truly implemented. Following is an outline of important implementation steps.

1. A Permanent Steering Committee

A permanent Steering Committee (the Senior Management team plus leadership and community representatives) will be established that is representative of all key departments and agencies responsible for any part of the Plan's implementation. The Steering Committee should have representatives of grassroots community members, staff, leadership, and the Boards of Trustees of Community Trusts. This group should be empowered by Chief and Council and the Trustees to guide and direct the implementation process.

2. CCP Coordinator

A senior-level manager Coordinator should be hired (or seconded) to the role of CCP Coordinator. This should be a full-time position. The Coordinator's role is to work under the direction of the Steering Committee to facilitate the implementation process. This work will include providing support to implementing departments and agencies, coordinating collaborative efforts across departments, leading ongoing monitoring and evaluation of progress, and facilitating capacity development related to CCP implementation.

3. Work Plan Development and Alignment

Each department, program or entity that has responsibility for carrying out some part of CCP implementation will need to develop a detailed work plan which identifies specific actors and their roles, short-term measurable goals and strategies, timelines, resource requirements, progress markers and evaluation indicators. Teams assigned to each of the eight areas of work within the plan will need to be brought together in a planning workshop and provided with technical support in the development of their work plans. Each separate program manager within these work groups will need support in adapting their team's work plans to accommodate the activities required for CCP implementation. Each front line worker will also need support in aligning their work plan and day-to-day activities with the goals and strategies described in the plan.

Is this really necessary?

If all the work teams within the COTT First Nation continue to think and do as they have always done, then the community is likely to get the same results and outcomes it has always gotten. Those old results and outcomes have been identified by the community as being no longer enough. Too many COTT individuals and families are still struggling with issues that prevent them from realizing their full potential—issues such as poverty, addictions, inter-generational trauma, and dependency thinking. Somehow community agencies and services will have to forge a new way of working that will produce greater wellbeing and prosperity.

Achieving this goal may mean that financial and human resources will have to be reorganized. Certainly it will mean that Band departments and services will need to work together under the protection of a clear and shared vision of possibility and the pathways that lead to that vision. This journey will require commitment to an on-going process of learning—learning that is shaped by trying out new ideas, reflecting on the impact of those experiments, and consulting together about next steps over the months, and even years to come.

4. Quarterly Reflection Workshops

What we measure tends to improve. In order to ensure that the process of CCP implementation maintains a steady and manageable pace, quarterly reflection (monitoring and evaluation) workshops will be organized by the CCP Steering Committee. These workshops will involve reflection on the experiences of participants in implementing the Plan and what is being learned through these experiences about how to be more effective. By measuring outcomes against progress indicators (developed by each work team), the entire network of CCP implementers will gradually become more and more effective in getting to the results we want. Community members who are supposed to be benefitting from the work underway and who are playing a part in implementing parts of the Plan will be an integral part of these quarterly reflection gatherings.

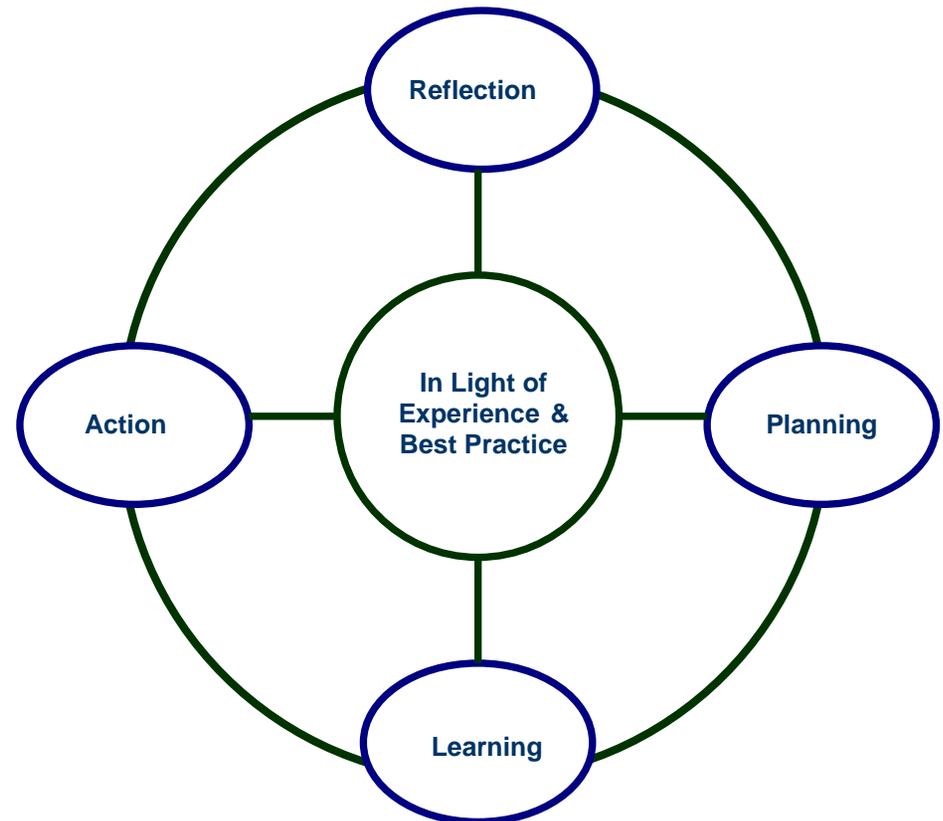
5. A Learning Engine

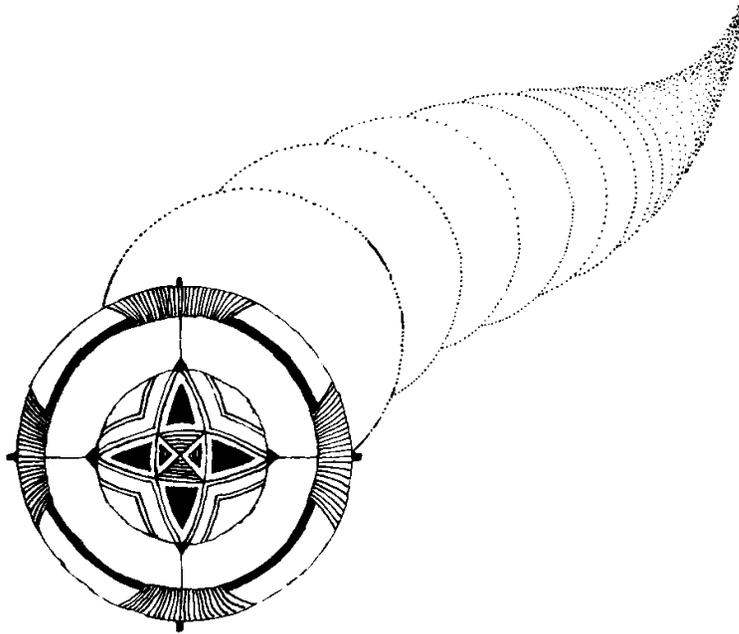
Experience worldwide has shown that in order to move a human system (individuals, families, groups, institutions, community networks, all interacting in a living system) from one set of outcomes to another, the **core dynamic of change is learning**. We will need to learn how to think and act differently together in order to get different results.

This learning can happen in many ways, but it is not likely to happen by itself. It needs to be facilitated and guided intentionally and it needs to be directly linked to the process of implementing the Plan. Whatever it is that people need to learn in order to be more effective in getting the results we are seeking—that is the learning agenda. The proof of learning is in the results. We will have learned what we need to learn when we are getting the results we want.

Some of the key areas for COTTFN learning that have been identified during the CCP planning process include the following: a) personal wellness and healing; b) transforming community conflict; c) building healthy organizations and workplace cultures; d) community development; e) developing effective interventions and programs to address key social issues; f) addictions, abuse and trauma; g) COTT cultural foundations; h) effective leadership for change; i) group facilitation; j) grantsmanship and fundraising; k) small business development; and l) shifting from a poverty mentality to an orientation of managing wealth.

These are only examples. The challenge is to provide a regular rhythm of needed learning experiences to a solid core group of implementers. This kind of learning is different from what most of us got in school. It is oriented to action and rooted in ongoing work. It starts with reflection on the experiences people are having in trying to implement the plan, and it directly connects to evaluation





The key to implementing this “learning engine” within comprehensive Community Planning is to view these four “moments”; i.e., a) *action*; b) *reflection* on actions taken and your experience with taking action; c) *learning* from the collective and cumulative experience of the whole network of implementers and from formal training that is plugged into the process at strategic intervals; and d) *planning*, which is basically re-affirming or refining your ongoing plans.

This process advances, cycle after cycle, all the while building capacity and moving ever closer to the realization of the goals of the Plan.